This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

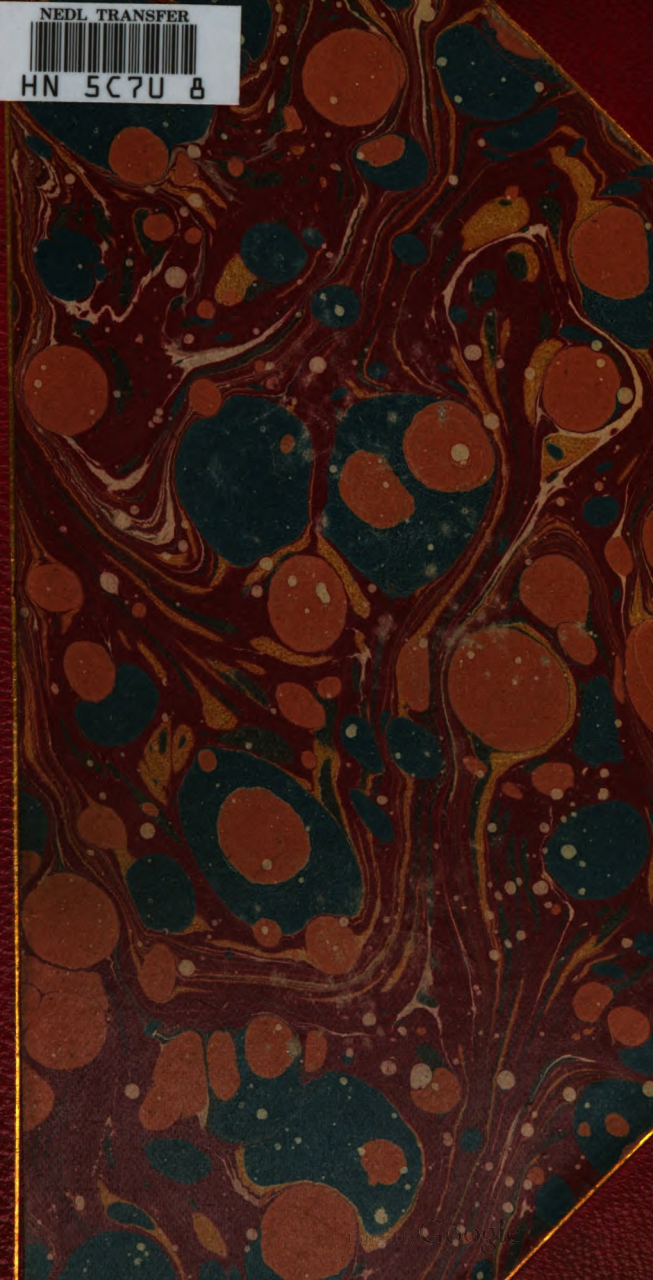
+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

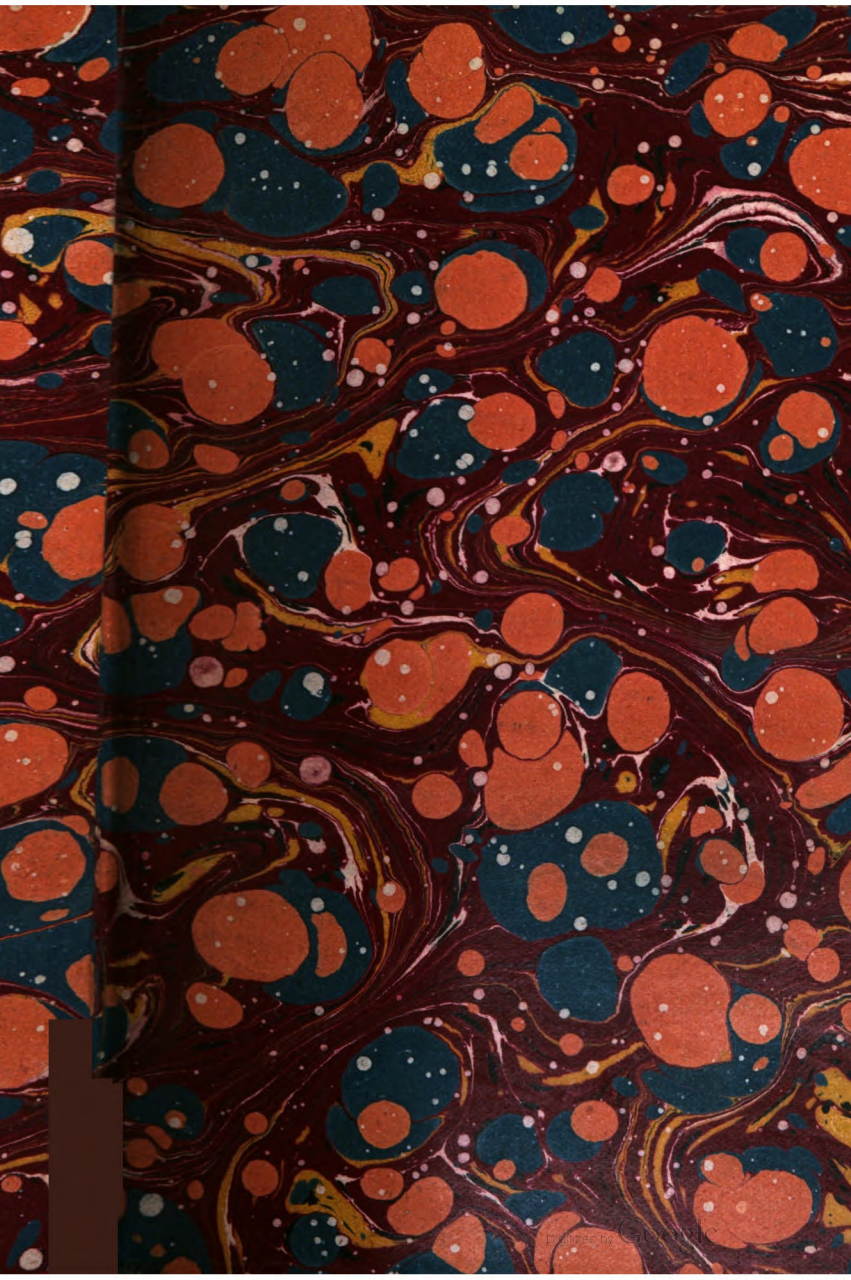
KD
43357
NEDL TRANSFER
HN 5C7U 8



KD 43357

EX LIBRIS RUSSELL GRAY

Digitized by Google



Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE

HISTORY OF ENGLAND

FROM THE ACCESSION OF JAMES THE SECOND

BY

LORD MACAULAY

VOLUME II.

LONDON
LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
1871

Digitized by Google

KD43357

Digitized by Google

CONTENTS

OF

THE SECOND VOLUME.

CHAPTER IV.

	Page
Death of Charles II.	1
Suspicions of Poison	14
Speech of James II. to the Privy Council	16
James proclaimed	18
State of the Administration	19
New Arrangements	21
Sir George Jeffreys	23
The Revenue collected without an Act of Parliament	28
A Parliament called	29
Transactions between James and the French King	30
Churchill sent Ambassador to France	33
Feelings of the Continental Governments towards England	37
Policy of the Court of Rome	40
Struggle in the Mind of James; Fluctuations of his Policy	43
Public Celebration of the Roman Catholic Rites in the Palace	45
His Coronation	47
Enthusiasm of the Tories; Addresses	50
The Elections	51
Proceedings against Oates	57
Proceedings against Dangerfield	63
Proceedings against Baxter	65
Meeting of the Parliament of Scotland	69
Feeling of James towards the Puritans	71
Cruel Treatment of the Scotch Covenanters	73
Feeling of James towards the Quakers	78
William Penn	80

Digitized by Google

Page
Peculiar Favour shown to Roman Catholics and Quakers - 84
Meeting of the English Parliament; Trevor chosen Speaker - 87
Character of Seymour - - - - - 88
The King's Speech to the Parliament - - - 90
Debate in the Commons; Speech of Seymour - - 91
The Revenue voted; Proceedings of the Commons concerning Religion - - - - - - 92
Additional Taxes voted; Sir Dudley North - - - 94
Proceedings of the Lords - - - - - 96
Bill for reversing the Attainder of Stafford - - - 98

CHAPTER V.

Whig Refugees on the Continent - - - - 100
Their Correspondents in England - - - - 101
Characters of the leading Refugees; Ayloffe - - - 102
Wade - - - - - - - - 103
Goodenough; Rumbold - - - - - 104
Lord Grey - - - - - - - 105
Monmouth - - - - - - - 106
Ferguson - - - - - - - 108
Scotch Refugees - - - - - - 113
Earl of Argyle - - - - - - 113
Sir Patrick Hume; Sir John Cochrane; Fletcher of Saltoun - 117
Unreasonable Conduct of the Scotch Refugees - - 118
Arrangement for an Attempt on England and Scotland - 120
John Locke - - - - - - - 122
Preparations made by Government for the Defence of Scotland - - - - - - - 123
Conversation of James with the Dutch Ambassadors - - 124
Ineffectual Attempts to prevent Argyle from sailing - - 125
Departure of Argyle from Holland - - - - 127
He lands in Scotland - - - - - 128
His Disputes with his Followers - - - - 129
Temper of the Scotch Nation - - - - 131
Argyle's Forces dispersed - - - - - 135
Argyle a Prisoner - - - - - - 136
His Execution - - - - - - 142
Execution of Rumbold - - - - - 143
Death of Ayloffe; Devastation of Argyleshire - - 146
Ineffectual Attempts to prevent Monmouth from leaving Holland - - - - - - - 147
His Arrival at Lyme - - - - - - 150
His Declaration - - - - - - 152

Digitized by Google

Page
His Popularity in the West of England - - - 153
Encounter of the Rebels with the Militia at Bridport - 155
Encounter of the Rebels with the Militia at Axminster - 157
News of the Rebellion carried to London; Loyalty of the Parliament - - - - - - - 158
Reception of Monmouth at Taunton - - - - 162
He takes the Title of King - - - - - 166
His Reception at Bridgewater - - - - 170
Preparations of the Government to oppose him - - 171
His Design on Bristol - - - - - 175
He relinquishes that Design - - - - - 177
Skirmish at Philip's Norton - - - - - 178
Despondence of Monmouth - - - - - 179
He returns to Bridgewater; the Royal Army encamps at Sedgemoor - - - - - - 181
Battle of Sedgemoor - - - - - - 186
Pursuit of the Rebels; military Executions - - - 193
Flight of Monmouth - - - - - - 194
His Capture - - - - - - - 196
His Letter to the King - - - - - 198
He is carried to London - - - - - 199
His Interview with the King - - - - - 200
His Execution - - - - - - 204
His Memory cherished by the common People - - 208
Cruelties of the Soldiers in the West; Kirke - - - 211
Jeffreys sets out on the Western Circuit - - - 217
Trial of Alice Lisle - - - - - - 218
The Bloody Assizes - - - - - - 223
Abraham Holmes - - - - - - 226
Christopher Battiscombe - - - - - 227
The Hewlings - - - - - - 228
Punishment of Tutchin - - - - - 229
Rebels transported - - - - - - 230
Confiscation and Extortion - - - - 232
Rapacity of the Queen and of her Ladies - - - 233
Grey; Cochrane; Storey - - - - - 241
Wade, Goodenough, and Ferguson - - - - 242
Jeffreys made Lord Chancellor - - - - 244
Trial and Execution of Cornish - - - - 245
Trials and Executions of Fernley and Elizabeth Gaunt - 247
Trial and Execution of Bateman - - - - 250
Persecution of the Protestant Dissenters - - - 251

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER VI.

	Page
The Power of James at the Height	254
His foreign Policy	255
His Plans of domestic Government; the Habeas Corpus Act	256
The standing Army	257
Designs in favour of the Roman Catholic Religion	258
Violation of the Test Act	264
Disgrace of Halifax	265
General Discontent	266
Persecution of the French Huguenots	267
Effect of that Persecution in England	270
Meeting of Parliament; Speech of the King	271
An Opposition formed in the House of Commons	272
Sentiments of Foreign Governments	274
Committee of the Commons on the King's Speech	275
Defeat of the Government	279
Second Defeat of the Government; the King reprimands the Commons	282
Coke committed by the Commons for Disrespect to the King	283
Opposition to the Government in the Lords; the Earl of Devonshire	284
The Bishop of London; Viscount Mordaunt	286
Prorogation	289
Trials of Lord Gerard and of Hampden	290
Trial of Delamere	291
Effect of his Acquittal	294
Parties in the Court; Feeling of the Protestant Tories	295
Publication of Papers found in the Strong Box of Charles II.	298
Feeling of the respectable Roman Catholics	299
Cabal of violent Roman Catholics; Castelmaine; Jermyn	301
White; Tyrconnel	302
Feeling of the Ministers of Foreign Governments	305
The Pope and the Order of Jesus opposed to each other	307
The Order of Jesus	308
Father Petre; the King's Temper and Opinions	315
The King encouraged in his Errors by Sunderland	318
Perfidy of Jeffreys	321
Godolphin; the Queen; Amours of the King	322
Catharine Sedley	323
Intrigues of Rochester in favour of Catharine Sedley	325
Decline of Rochester's Influence	329

Digitized by Google

Page
Castelmaine sent to Rome - - - - - 331
The Huguenots ill treated by James - - - 332
The dispensing Power - - - - - 335
Dismission of refractory Judges - - - - 336
Case of Sir Edward Hales - - - - - 338
Roman Catholics authorised to hold ecclesiastical Benefices; Sclater - - - - - - - - 340
Walker - - - - - - - - 341
The Deanery of Christchurch given to a Roman Catholic - 342
Disposal of Bishoprics - - - - - 343
Resolution of James to use his ecclesiastical Supremacy against the Church; his Difficulties - - - 344
He creates a new Court of High Commission - - 348
Proceedings against the Bishop of London - - - 352
Discontent excited by the public Display of Roman Catholic Rites and Vestments - - - - - 353
Riots - - - - - - - - 355
A Camp formed at Hounslow - - - - 357
Samuel Johnson - - - - - - 359
Hugh Speke - - - - - - - 360
Proceedings against Johnson - - - - - 361
Zeal of the Anglican Clergy against Popery - - - 363
The Roman Catholic Divines overmatched - - - 365
State of Scotland - - - - - - 367
Queensberry - - - - - - - 368
Perth and Melfort - - - - - - 369
Favour shown to the Roman Catholic Religion in Scotland - 370
Riots at Edinburgh - - - - - - 371
Anger of the King - - - - - - 372
His Plans concerning Scotland; Deputation of Scotch Privy Councillors sent to London - - - - 373
Their Negotiations with the King; Meeting of the Scotch Estates; they prove refractory - - - - 375
They are adjourned; arbitrary System of Government in Scotland - - - - - - 380
Ireland - - - - - - - - 382
State of the Law on the Subject of Religion - - - 383
Hostility of Races - - - - - - 384
Aboriginal Peasantry; aboriginal Aristocracy - - 385
State of the English Colony - - - - - 387
Course which James ought to have followed - - - 389
His Errors - - - - - - - - 392
Clarendon arrives in Ireland as Lord Lieutenant; his Mortifications - - - - - - - - 395

Digitized by Google

Page
Panic among the Colonists - - - - - 396
Arrival of Tyrconnel at Dublin as General - - - 399
His Partiality and Violence - - - - - 400
He is bent on the Repeal of the Act of Settlement; he returns to England - - - - - 402
The King displeased with Clarendon - - - 403
Rochester attacked by the Jesuitical Cabal - - - 404
Attempts of James to convert Rochester - - - 406
Dismission of Rochester - - - - - 411
Dismission of Clarendon; Tyrconnel Lord Deputy - - 413
Dismay of the English Colonists in Ireland - - - 415
Effect of the Fall of the Hydes - - - - 417

CHAPTER VII.

William, Prince of Orange; his Appearance - - - 418
His early Life and Education - - - - 419
His theological Opinions - - - - - 421
His military Qualifications - - - - - 422
His Love of Danger; his bad Health - - - 425
Coldness of his Manners and Strength of his Emotions - 426
His Friendship for Bentinck - - - - - 427
Mary, Princess of Orange - - - - 430
Gilbert Burnet - - - - - - - 432
He brings about a good Understanding between the Prince and Princess - - - - - - 437
Relations between William and English Parties - - 438
His Feelings towards England; his Feelings towards Holland and France - - - - - - 439
His Policy consistent throughout - - - - 445
Treaty of Augsburg - - - - - - 448
William becomes the Head of the English Opposition - 449
Mordaunt proposes to William a Descent on England - 450
William rejects the Advice - - - - - 451
Discontent in England after the Fall of the Hydes - - 452
Conversions to Popery; Peterborough; Salisbury - - 453
Wycherley; Tindal; Haines - - - - 454
Dryden - - - - - - - - 455
The Hind and Panther - - - - - 458
Change in the Policy of the Court towards the Puritans - 460
Partial Toleration granted in Scotland - - - 465
Closeting - - - - - - - - 467
It is unsuccessful; Admiral Herbert - - - - 468

Digitized by Google

Page
Declaration of Indulgence - - - - - 469
Feeling of the Protestant Dissenters - - - - 471
Feeling of the Church of England - - - - 473
The Court and the Church - - - - - 474
Letter to a Dissenter - - - - - - 477
Conduct of the Dissenters - - - - - 478
Some of the Dissenters side with the Court; Care; Alsop - 481
Rosewell; Lobb - - - - - - - 482
Penn - - - - - - - - - 483
The Majority of the Puritans are against the Court; Baxter; Howe - - - - - - - - 484
Bunyan - - - - - - - - 485
Kiffin - - - - - - - - 488
The Prince and Princess of Orange hostile to the Declaration of Indulgence - - - - - - 493
Their Views respecting the English Roman Catholics vindicated - - - - - - - 496
Enmity of James to Burnet - - - - - 503
Mission of Dykvelt to England - - - - 505
Negotiations of Dykvelt with English Statesmen - - 506
Danby; Nottingham - - - - - 507
Halifax; Devonshire - - - - - 509
Edward Russell - - - - - - 513
Compton; Herbert - - - - - - 514
Churchill - - - - - - - 515
Lady Churchill and the Princess Anne - - - 516
Dykvelt returns to the Hague with Letters from many eminent Englishmen - - - - - 520
Zulestein's Mission - - - - - - 521
Growing Enmity between James and William - - 522
Influence of the Dutch Press - - - - - 524
Correspondence of Stewart and Fagel - - - 525
Castelmaine's Embassy to Rome - - - - 526

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

CHAPTER IV.

THE death of King Charles the Second took the nation by surprise. His frame was naturally strong, and did not appear to have suffered from excess. He had always been mindful of his health even in his pleasures; and his habits were such as promise a long life and a robust old age. Indolent as he was on all occasions which required tension of the mind, he was active and persevering in bodily exercise. He had, when young, been renowned as a tennis player *, and was, even in the decline of life, an indefatigable walker. His ordinary pace was such that those who were admitted to the honour of his society found it difficult to keep up with him. He rose early, and generally passed three or four hours a day in the open air. He might be seen, before the dew was off the grass in Saint James's Park, striding among the trees, playing with his spaniels, and flinging corn to his ducks; and these exhibitions endeared him to the common people, who always love to see the great unbend.†

1685. Death of Charles II.

At length, towards the close of the year 1684, he was prevented, by a slight attack of what was sup-

* Pepys's Diary, Dec. 28. 1663, Sept. 2. 1667.

† Burnet, i. 606.; Spectator No. 462.; Lords' Journals, October 28. 1678.; Cibber's Apology.

Digitized by Google

posed to be gout, from rambling as usual. He now spent his mornings in his laboratory, where he amused himself with experiments on the properties of mercury. His temper seemed to have suffered from confinement. He had no apparent cause for disquiet. His kingdom was tranquil: he was not in pressing want of money: his power was greater than it had ever been: the party which had long thwarted him had been beaten down; but the cheerfulness which had supported him against adverse fortune had vanished in this season of prosperity. A trifle now sufficed to depress those elastic spirits which had borne up against defeat, exile, and penury. His irritation frequently showed itself by looks and words such as could hardly have been expected from a man so eminently distinguished by good humour and good breeding. It was not supposed however that his constitution was seriously impaired.*

His palace had seldom presented a gayer or a more scandalous appearance than on the evening of Sunday the first of February 1685.† Some grave persons who had gone thither, after the fashion of that age, to pay their duty to their sovereign, and who had expected that, on such a day, his court would wear a decent aspect, were struck with astonishment and horror. The great gallery of Whitehall, an admirable relic of the magnificence of the Tudors, was crowded with revellers and gamblers. The King sate there chatting and toying with three women, whose charms were the boast, and whose vices were the disgrace, of three nations. Barbara Palmer, Duchess of Cleveland, was there, no longer young, but still retaining some traces of that superb

* Burnet, i. 605, 606.; Welwood; North's Life of Guildford, 251.

† I may take this opportunity of mentioning that whenever I give only one date, I follow the old style, which was, in the seventeenth century, the style of England; but I reckon the year from the first of January.

Digitized by Google

and voluptuous loveliness which twenty years before overcame the hearts of all men. There too was the Duchess of Portsmouth, whose soft and infantine features were lighted up with the vivacity of France. Hortensia Mancini, Duchess of Mazarin, and niece of the great Cardinal, completed the group. She had been early removed from her native Italy to the court where her uncle was supreme. His power and her own attractions had drawn a crowd of illustrious suitors round her. Charles himself, during his exile, had sought her hand in vain. No gift of nature or of fortune seemed to be wanting to her. Her face was beautiful with the rich beauty of the South, her understanding quick, her manners graceful, her rank exalted, her possessions immense; but her ungovernable passions had turned all these blessings into curses. She had found the misery of an ill assorted marriage intolerable, had fled from her husband, had abandoned her vast wealth, and, after having astonished Rome and Piedmont by her adventures, had fixed her abode in England. Her house was the favourite resort of men of wit and pleasure, who, for the sake of her smiles and her table, endured her frequent fits of insolence and ill humour. Rochester and Godolphin sometimes forgot the cares of state in her company. Barillon and Saint Evremond found in her drawing room consolation for their long banishment from Paris. The learning of Vossius, the wit of Waller, were daily employed to flatter and amuse her. But her diseased mind required stronger stimulants, and sought them in gallantry, in basset, and in usquebaugh.* While Charles flirted with his three sultanas, Hortensia's French page, a handsome boy, whose vocal performances were the delight of

* Saint Evremond, *passim*; Saint Réal, Mémoires de la Duchesse de Mazarin; Rochester's Farewell; Evelyn's Diary, Sept. 6. 1676, June 11. 1699.

Digitized by Google

Whitehall, and were rewarded by numerous presents of rich clothes, ponies, and guineas, warbled some amorous verses.* A party of twenty courtiers was seated at cards round a large table on which gold was heaped in mountains.† Even then the King had complained that he did not feel quite well. He had no appetite for his supper: his rest that night was broken; but on the following morning he rose, as usual, early.

To that morning the contending factions in his council had, during some days, looked forward with anxiety. The struggle between Halifax and Rochester seemed to be approaching a decisive crisis. Halifax, not content with having already driven his rival from the Board of Treasury, had undertaken to prove him guilty of such dishonesty or neglect in the conduct of the finances as ought to be punished by dismission from the public service. It was even whispered that the Lord President would probably be sent to the Tower. The King had promised to enquire into the matter. The second of February had been fixed for the investigation; and several officers of the revenue had been ordered to attend with their books on that day.‡ But a great turn of fortune was at hand.

Scarcely had Charles risen from his bed when his attendants perceived that his utterance was indistinct, and that his thoughts seemed to be wandering. Several men of rank had, as usual, assembled to see their sovereign shaved and dressed. He made an effort to converse with them in his usual gay style; but his ghastly look surprised and alarmed them.

* Evelyn's Diary, Jan. 28. 168⅓; Saint Evremond's Letter to Déry.

† Evelyn's Diary, February 4. 168⅓.

‡ Roger North's Life of Sir Dudley North, 170.; The True Patriot vindicated, or a Justification of his Excellency the E—— of R——; Burnet, i. 605. The Treasury Books prove that Burnet had good intelligence.

Digitized by Google

Soon his face grew black; his eyes turned in his head; he uttered a cry, staggered, and fell into the arms of one of his lords. A physician who had charge of the royal retorts and crucibles happened to be present. He had no lancet; but he opened a vein with a penknife. The blood flowed freely; but the King was still insensible.

He was laid on his bed, where, during a short time, the Duchess of Portsmouth hung over him with the familiarity of a wife. But the alarm had been given. The Queen and the Duchess of York were hastening to the room. The favourite concubine was forced to retire to her own apartments. Those apartments had been thrice pulled down and thrice rebuilt by her lover to gratify her caprice. The very furniture of the chimney was massy silver. Several fine paintings, which properly belonged to the Queen, had been transferred to the dwelling of the mistress. The sideboards were piled with richly wrought plate. In the niches stood cabinets, the masterpieces of Japanese art. On the hangings, fresh from the looms of Paris, were depicted, in tints which no English tapestry could rival, birds of gorgeous plumage, landscapes, hunting matches, the lordly terrace of Saint Germains, the statues and fountains of Versailles.* In the midst of this splendour, purchased by guilt and shame, the unhappy woman gave herself up to an agony of grief, which, to do her justice, was not wholly selfish.

And now the gates of Whitehall, which ordinarily stood open to all comers, were closed. But persons whose faces were known were still permitted to enter. The antechambers and galleries were soon filled to overflowing; and even the sick room was crowded with peers, privy councillors, and foreign ministers. All the medical men of note in London were sum-

* Evelyn's Diary, Jan. 24. 1685, Oct. 4. 1683.

Digitized by Google

moned. So high did political animosities run that the presence of some Whig physicians was regarded as an extraordinary circumstance.* One Roman Catholic whose skill was then widely renowned, Doctor Thomas Short, was in attendance. Several of the prescriptions have been preserved. One of them is signed by fourteen Doctors. The patient was bled largely. Hot iron was applied to his head. A loathsome volatile salt, extracted from human skulls, was forced into his mouth. He recovered his senses; but he was evidently in a situation of extreme danger.

The Queen was for a time assiduous in her attendance. The Duke of York scarcely left his brother's bedside. The Primate and four other Bishops were then in London. They remained at Whitehall all day, and took it by turns to sit up at night in the King's room. The news of his illness filled the capital with sorrow and dismay. For his easy temper and affable manners had won the affection of a large part of the nation; and those who most disliked him preferred his unprincipled levity to the stern and earnest bigotry of his brother.

On the morning of Thursday the fifth of February, the London Gazette announced that His Majesty was going on well, and was thought by the physicians to be out of danger. The bells of all the churches rang merrily; and preparations for bonfires were made in the streets. But in the evening it was known that a relapse had taken place, and that the medical attendants had given up all hope. The public mind was greatly disturbed; but there was no disposition to tumult. The Duke of York, who had already taken on himself to give orders, ascertained that the City was perfectly quiet, and that he might without difficulty be proclaimed as soon as his brother should expire.

* Dugdale's Correspondence.

Digitized by Google

The King was in great pain, and complained that he felt as if a fire was burning within him. Yet he bore up against his sufferings with a fortitude which did not seem to belong to his soft and luxurious nature. The sight of his misery affected his wife so much that she fainted, and was carried senseless to her chamber. The prelates who were in waiting had from the first exhorted him to prepare for his end. They now thought it their duty to address him in a still more urgent manner. William Sancroft, Archbishop of Canterbury, an honest and pious, though narrowminded, man, used great freedom. "It is time," he said, "to speak out; for, Sir, you are about to appear before a Judge who is no respecter of persons." The King answered not a word.

Thomas Ken, Bishop of Bath and Wells, then tried his powers of persuasion. He was a man of parts and learning, of quick sensibility and stainless virtue. His elaborate works have long been forgotten; but his morning and evening hymns are still repeated daily in thousands of dwellings. Though, like most of his order, zealous for monarchy, he was no sycophant. Before he became a Bishop, he had maintained the honour of his gown by refusing, when the court was at Winchester, to let Eleanor Gwynn lodge in the house which he occupied there as a prebendary.* The King had sense enough to respect so manly a spirit. Of all the prelates he liked Ken the best. It was to no purpose, however, that the good Bishop now put forth all his eloquence. His solemn and pathetic exhortation awed and melted the bystanders to such a degree that some among them believed him to be filled with the same spirit which, in the old time, had, by the mouths of Nathan and Elias, called sinful princes to repentance. Charles however was unmoved. He made no objection indeed when

* Hawkins's Life of Ken, 1713.

Digitized by Google

the service for the Visitation of the Sick was read. In reply to the pressing questions of the divines, he said that he was sorry for what he had done amiss; and he suffered the absolution to be pronounced over him according to the forms of the Church of England: but, when he was urged to declare that he died in the communion of that Church, he seemed not to hear what was said; and nothing could induce him to take the Eucharist from the hands of the Bishops. A table with bread and wine was brought to his bedside, but in vain. Sometimes he said that there was no hurry, and sometimes that he was too weak.

Many attributed this apathy to contempt for divine things, and many to the stupor which often precedes death. But there were in the palace a few persons who knew better. Charles had never been a sincere member of the Established Church. His mind had long oscillated between Hobbism and Popery. When his health was good and his spirits high, he was a scoffer. In his few serious moments he was a Roman Catholic. The Duke of York was aware of this, but was entirely occupied with the care of his own interests. He had ordered the outports to be closed. He had posted detachments of the Guards in different parts of the City. He had also procured the feeble signature of the dying King to an instrument by which some duties, granted only till the demise of the Crown, were let to farm for a term of three years. These things occupied the attention of James to such a degree that, though, on ordinary occasions, he was indiscreetly and unseasonably eager to bring over proselytes to his Church, he never reflected that his brother was in danger of dying without the last sacraments. This neglect was the more extraordinary because the Duchess of York had, at the request of the Queen, suggested, on the morning on which the King was taken ill, the propriety of

Digitized by Google

procuring spiritual assistance. For such assistance Charles was at last indebted to an agency very different from that of his pious wife and sister in law. A life of frivolity and vice had not extinguished in the Duchess of Portsmouth all sentiments of religion, or all that kindness which is the glory of her sex. The French ambassador Barillon, who had come to the palace to enquire after the King, paid her a visit. He found her in an agony of sorrow. She took him into a secret room, and poured out her whole heart to him. "I have," she said, "a thing of great moment to tell you. If it were known, my head would be in danger. The King is really and truly a Catholic; but he will die without being reconciled to the Church. His bedchamber is full of Protestant clergymen. I cannot enter it without giving scandal. The Duke is thinking only of himself. Speak to him. Remind him that there is a soul at stake. He is master now. He can clear the room. Go this instant, or it will be too late."

Barillon hastened to the bedchamber, took the Duke aside, and delivered the message of the mistress. The conscience of James smote him. He started as if roused from sleep, and declared that nothing should prevent him from discharging the sacred duty which had been too long delayed. Several schemes were discussed and rejected. At last the Duke commanded the crowd to stand aloof, went to the bed, stooped down, and whispered something which none of the spectators could hear, but which they supposed to be some question about affairs of state. Charles answered in an audible voice, "Yes, yes, with all my heart." None of the bystanders, except the French Ambassador, guessed that the King was declaring his wish to be admitted into the bosom of the Church of Rome.

"Shall I bring a priest?" said the Duke. "Do, brother," replied the sick man. "For God's sake do,

Digitized by Google

and lose no time. But no; you will get into trouble." "If it costs me my life," said the Duke, "I will fetch a priest."

To find a priest, however, for such a purpose, at a moment's notice, was not easy. For, as the law then stood, the person who admitted a proselyte into the Roman Catholic Church was guilty of a capital crime. The Count of Castel Melhor, a Portuguese nobleman, who, driven by political troubles from his native land, had been hospitably received at the English court, undertook to procure a confessor. He had recourse to his countrymen who belonged to the Queen's household; but he found that none of her chaplains knew English or French enough to shrive the King. The Duke and Barillon were about to send to the Venetian minister for a clergyman, when they heard that a Benedictine monk, named John Huddleston, happened to be at Whitehall. This man had, with great risk to himself, saved the King's life after the battle of Worcester, and had, on that account, been, ever since the Restoration, a privileged person. In the sharpest proclamations which had been put forth against Popish priests, when false witnesses had inflamed the nation to fury, Huddleston had been excepted by name.* He readily consented to put his life a second time in peril for his prince; but there was still a difficulty. The honest monk was so illiterate that he did not know what he ought to say on an occasion of such importance. He however obtained some hints, through the intervention of Castel Melhor, from a Portuguese ecclesiastic, and, thus instructed, was brought up the back stairs by Chiffinch, a confidential servant, who, if the satires of that age are to be credited, had often introduced

* See the London Gazette of Nov. 21. 1678. Barillon and Burnet say that Huddleston was excepted out of all the Acts of Parliament made against priests; but this is a mistake.

Digitized by Google

visitors of a very different description by the same entrance. The Duke then, in the King's name, commanded all who were present to quit the room, except Lewis Duras, Earl of Feversham, and John Granville, Earl of Bath. Both these Lords professed the Protestant religion; but James conceived that he could count on their fidelity. Feversham, a Frenchman of noble birth, and nephew of the great Turenne, held high rank in the English army, and was Chamberlain to the Queen. Bath was Groom of the Stole.

The Duke's orders were obeyed; and even the physicians withdrew. The back door was then opened; and Father Huddleston entered. A cloak had been thrown over his sacred vestments; and his shaven crown was concealed by a flowing wig. "Sir," said the Duke, "this good man once saved your life. He now comes to save your soul." Charles faintly answered, "He is welcome." Huddleston went through his part better than had been expected. He knelt by the bed, listened to the confession, pronounced the absolution, and administered extreme unction. He asked if the King wished to receive the Lord's supper. "Surely," said Charles, "if I am not unworthy." The host was brought in. Charles feebly strove to rise and kneel before it. The priest bade him lie still, and assured him that God would accept the humiliation of the soul, and would not require the humiliation of the body. The King found so much difficulty in swallowing the bread that it was necessary to open the door and to procure a glass of water. This rite ended, the monk held up a crucifix before the penitent, charged him to fix his last thoughts on the sufferings of the Redeemer, and withdrew. The whole ceremony had occupied about three quarters of an hour; and, during that time, the courtiers who filled the outer room had communicated their suspicions to each other by whispers and significant

Digitized by Google

glances. The door was at length thrown open, and the crowd again filled the chamber of death.

It was now late in the evening. The King seemed much relieved by what had passed. His natural children were brought to his bedside, the Dukes of Grafton, Southampton, and Northumberland, sons of the Duchess of Cleveland, the Duke of Saint Albans, son of Eleanor Gwynn, and the Duke of Richmond, son of the Duchess of Portsmouth. Charles blessed them all, but spoke with peculiar tenderness to Richmond. One face which should have been there was wanting. The eldest and best beloved child was an exile and a wanderer. His name was not once mentioned by his father.

During the night Charles earnestly recommended the Duchess of Portsmouth and her boy to the care of James; "And do not," he goodnaturedly added, "let poor Nelly starve." The Queen sent excuses for her absence by Halifax. She said that she was too much disordered to resume her post by the couch, and implored pardon for any offence which she might unwittingly have given. "She ask my pardon, poor woman!" cried Charles; "I ask hers with all my heart."

The morning light began to peep through the windows of Whitehall; and Charles desired the attendants to pull aside the curtains, that he might have one more look at the day. He remarked that it was time to wind up a clock which stood near his bed. These little circumstances were long remembered, because they proved beyond dispute that, when he declared himself a Roman Catholic, he was in full possession of his faculties. He apologised to those who had stood round him all night for the trouble which he had caused. He had been, he said, a most unconscionable time dying; but he hoped that they would excuse it. This was the last glimpse of that exquisite urbanity, so often found potent to

Digitized by Google

charm away the resentment of a justly incensed nation. Soon after dawn the speech of the dying man failed. Before ten his senses were gone. Great numbers had repaired to the churches at the hour of morning service. When the prayer for the King was read, loud groans and sobs showed how deeply his people felt for him. At noon on Friday, the sixth of February, he passed away without a struggle.*

* Clarke's Life of James the Second, i. 746. Orig. Mem.; Barillon's Despatch of Feb. $\frac{6}{16}$. 1685; Van Citters's Despatches of Feb. $\frac{3}{13}$. and Feb. $\frac{6}{16}$.; Huddleston's Narrative; Letters of Philip, second Earl of Chesterfield, 277.; Sir H. Ellis's Original Letters, First Series, iii. 333.; Second Series, iv. 74.; Chaillot MS.; Burnet, i. 606.; Evelyn's Diary, Feb. 4. $168\frac{4}{5}$; Welwood's Memoirs, 140.; North's Life of Guildford, 252.; Examen, 648.; Hawkins's Life of Ken; Dryden's Threnodia Augustalis; Sir H. Halford's Essay on Deaths of Eminent Persons. See also a fragment of a letter written by the Earl of Ailesbury, which is printed in the European Magazine for April 1795. Ailesbury calls Burnet an impostor. Yet his own narrative and Burnet's will not, to any candid and sensible reader, appear to contradict each other. I have seen in the British Museum, and also in the Library of the Royal Institution, a curious broadside containing an account of the death of Charles. It will be found in the Somers Collection. The author was evidently a zealous Roman Catholic, and must have had access to good sources of information. I strongly suspect that he had been in communication, directly or indirectly, with James himself. No name is given at length; but the initials are perfectly intelligible, except in one place. It is said that the D. of Y. was reminded of the duty which he owed to his brother by P. M. A. C. F. I must own myself quite unable to decipher the last five letters. It is some consolation that Sir Walter Scott was equally unsuccessful. (1848.) Since the first edition of this work was published, several very ingenious conjectures touching these mysterious letters have been communicated to me; but I am convinced that the true solution has not yet been suggested. (1850.) I still greatly doubt whether the riddle has been solved. But the most plausible interpretation is one which, with some variations, occurred, almost at the same time, to myself and to several other persons; I am inclined to read "Père Mansuete A Cordelier Friar." Mansuete, a Cordelier, was then James's confessor. To Mansuete therefore it peculiarly belonged to remind James of a sacred duty which had been culpably neglected. The writer of the broadside must have been unwilling to inform the world that a soul which many

Digitized by Google

Suspicions of poison.

At that time the common people throughout Europe, and nowhere more than in England, were in the habit of attributing the deaths of princes, especially when the prince was popular and the death unexpected, to the foulest and darkest kind of assassination. Thus James the First had been accused of poisoning Prince Henry. Thus Charles the First had been accused of poisoning James the First. Thus when, in the time of the

devout Roman Catholics had left to perish had been snatched from destruction by the courageous charity of a woman of loose character. It is therefore not unlikely that he would prefer a fiction, at once probable and edifying, to a truth which could not fail to give scandal. (1856.)

It should seem that no transactions in history ought to be more accurately known to us than those which took place round the death-bed of Charles the Second. We have several relations written by persons who were actually in his room. We have several relations written by persons who, though not themselves eyewitnesses, had the best opportunity of obtaining information from eyewitnesses. Yet whoever attempts to digest this vast mass of materials into a consistent narrative will find the task a difficult one. Indeed James and his wife, when they told the story to the nuns of Chaillot, could not agree as to some circumstances. The Queen said that, after Charles had received the last sacraments, the Protestant Bishops renewed their exhortations. The King said that nothing of the kind took place. "Surely," said the Queen, "you told me so yourself." "It is impossible that I could have told you so," said the King; "for nothing of the sort happened."

It is much to be regretted that Sir Henry Halford should have taken so little trouble to ascertain the facts on which he pronounced judgment. He does not seem to have been aware of the existence of the narratives of James, Barillon, and Huddleston.

As this is the first occasion on which I cite the correspondence of the Dutch ministers at the English court, I ought here to mention that a series of their despatches, from the accession of James the Second to his flight, forms one of the most valuable parts of the Mackintosh collection. The subsequent despatches, down to the settlement of the government in February 1689, I procured from the Hague. The Dutch archives have been far too little explored. They abound with information interesting in the highest degree to every Englishman. They are admirably arranged; and they are in the charge of gentlemen whose courtesy, liberality, and zeal for the interests of literature, cannot be too highly praised. I wish to acknowledge, in the strongest manner, my own obligations to Mr. De Jonge and to Mr. Van Zwanne.

Digitized by Google

Commonwealth, the Princess Elizabeth died at Carisbrook, it was loudly asserted that Cromwell had stooped to the senseless and dastardly wickedness of mixing noxious drugs with the food of a young girl whom he had no conceivable motive to injure.* A few years later, the rapid decomposition of Cromwell's own corpse was ascribed by many to a deadly potion administered in his medicine. The death of Charles the Second could scarcely fail to occasion similar rumours. The public ear had been repeatedly abused by stories of Popish plots against his life. There was, therefore, in many minds, a strong predisposition to suspicion; and there were some unlucky circumstances which, to minds so predisposed, might seem to indicate that a crime had been perpetrated. The fourteen Doctors who deliberated on the King's case contradicted each other and themselves. Some of them thought that his fit was epileptic, and that he should be suffered to have his doze out. The majority pronounced him apoplectic, and tortured him during some hours like an Indian at a stake. Then it was determined to call his complaint a fever, and to administer doses of bark. One physician, however, protested against this course, and assured the Queen that his brethren would kill the King among them. Nothing better than dissension and vacillation could be expected from such a multitude of advisers. But many of the vulgar not unnaturally concluded, from the perplexity of the great masters of the healing art, that the malady had some extraordinary origin. There is reason to believe that a horrible suspicion did actually cross the mind of Short, who, though skilful in his profession, seems to have been a nervous

* Clarendon mentions this calumny with just scorn. "According to the charity of the time towards Cromwell, very many would have it believed to be by poison, of which there was no appearance, nor any proof ever after made."—Book xiv.

Digitized by Google

and fanciful man, and whose perceptions were probably confused by dread of the odious imputations to which he, as a Roman Catholic, was peculiarly exposed. We cannot, therefore, wonder that wild stories without number were repeated and believed by the common people. His Majesty's tongue had swelled to the size of a neat's tongue. A cake of deleterious powder had been found in his brain. There were blue spots on his breast. There were black spots on his shoulder. Something had been put into his snuffbox. Something had been put into his broth. Something had been put into his favourite dish of eggs and ambergrease. The Duchess of Portsmouth had poisoned him in a cup of chocolate. The Queen had poisoned him in a jar of dried pears. Such tales ought to be preserved; for they furnish us with a measure of the intelligence and virtue of the generation which eagerly devoured them. That no rumour of the same kind has ever, in the present age, found credit among us, even when lives on which great interests depended have been terminated by unforeseen attacks of disease, is to be attributed partly to the progress of medical and chemical science, but partly also, it may be hoped, to the progress which the nation has made in good sense, justice, and humanity.*

Speech of James II. to the Privy Council.

When all was over, James retired from the bedside to his closet, where, during a quarter of an hour, he remained alone. Meanwhile the Privy Councillors who were in the

* Welwood, 139.; Burnet, i. 609.; Sheffield's Character of Charles the Second; North's Life of Guildford, 252.; Examen, 648.; Revolution Politics; Higgons on Burnet. What North says of the embarrassment and vacillation of the physicians is confirmed by the despatches of Van Citters. I have been much perplexed by the strange story about Short's suspicions. I was, at one time, inclined to adopt North's solution. But, though I attach little weight to the authority of Welwood and Burnet in such a case, I cannot reject the testimony of so well informed and so unwilling a witness as Sheffield.

Digitized by Google

palace assembled. The new King came forth, and took his place at the head of the board. He commenced his administration, according to usage, by a speech to the Council. He expressed his regret for the loss which he had just sustained, and he promised to imitate the singular lenity which had distinguished the late reign. He was aware, he said, that he had been accused of a fondness for arbitrary power. But that was not the only falsehood which had been told of him. He was resolved to maintain the established government both in Church and State. The Church of England he knew to be eminently loyal. It should therefore always be his care to support and defend her. The laws of England, he also knew, were sufficient to make him as great a King as he could wish to be. He would not relinquish his own rights; but he would respect the rights of others. He had formerly risked his life in defence of his country; and he would still go as far as any man in support of her just liberties.

This speech was not, like modern speeches on similar occasions, carefully prepared by the advisers of the sovereign. It was the extemporaneous expression of the new King's feelings at a moment of great excitement. The members of the Council broke forth into clamours of delight and gratitude. The Lord President, Rochester, in the name of his brethren, expressed a hope that His Majesty's most welcome declaration would be made public. The Solicitor General, Heneage Finch, offered to act as clerk. He was a zealous churchman, and, as such, was naturally desirous that there should be some permanent record of the gracious promises which had just been uttered. "Those promises," he said, "have made so deep an impression on me that I can repeat them word for word." He soon produced his report. James read it, approved of it, and ordered it to be published. At a later period he said that he had taken this step with-

Digitized by Google

out due consideration, that his unpremeditated expressions touching the Church of England were too strong, and that Finch had, with a dexterity which at the time escaped notice, made them still stronger.*

James proclaimed.

The King had been exhausted by long watching and by many violent emotions. He now retired to rest. The Privy Councillors, having respectfully accompanied him to his bedchamber, returned to their seats, and issued orders for the ceremony of proclamation. The Guards were under arms; the heralds appeared in their gorgeous coats; and the pageant proceeded without any obstruction. Casks of wine were broken up in the streets, and all who passed were invited to drink to the health of the new sovereign. But, though an occasional shout was raised, the people were not in a joyous mood. Tears were seen in many eyes; and it was remarked that there was scarcely a housemaid in London who had not contrived to procure some fragment of black crape in honour of King Charles.†

The funeral called forth much censure. It would, indeed, hardly have been accounted worthy of a noble and opulent subject. The Tories gently blamed the new King's parsimony: the Whigs sneered at his want of natural affection; and the fiery Covenanters of Scotland exultingly proclaimed that the curse denounced of old against wicked princes had been signally fulfilled, and that the departed tyrant had been buried with the burial of an ass.‡ Yet James commenced his administration with a large measure of public good will. His speech to the Council appeared in print, and the impression which it pro-

* London Gazette, Feb. 9. 168½; Clarke's Life of James the Second, ii. 3.; Barillon, Feb. $\frac{8}{18}$.; Evelyn's Diary, Feb. 6.

† See the authorities cited in the last note. See also the Examen, 647.; Burnet, i. 620.; Higgons on Burnet.

‡ London Gazette, Feb. 14. 168½; Evelyn's Diary of the same day; Burnet, i. 610.; The Hind let loose.

Digitized by Google

duced was highly favourable to him. This, then, was the prince whom a faction had driven into exile and had tried to rob of his birthright, on the ground that he was a deadly enemy to the religion and laws of England. He had triumphed: he was on the throne; and his first act was to declare that he would defend the Church, and would strictly respect the rights of his people. The estimate which all parties had formed of his character, added weight to every word that fell from him. The Whigs called him haughty, implacable, obstinate, regardless of public opinion. The Tories, while they extolled his princely virtues, had often lamented his neglect of the arts which conciliate popularity. Satire itself had never represented him as a man likely to court public favour by professing what he did not feel, and by promising what he had no intention of performing. On the Sunday which followed his accession, his speech was quoted in many pulpits. "We have now for our Church," cried one loyal preacher, "the word of a King, and of a King who was never worse than his word." This pointed sentence was fast circulated through town and country, and was soon the watchword of the whole Tory party.*

State of the administration.

The great offices of state had become vacant by the demise of the crown; and it was necessary for James to determine how they should be filled. Few of the members of the late cabinet had any reason to expect his favour. Sunderland, who was Secretary of State, and Godolphin, who was First Lord of the Treasury, had supported the Exclusion Bill. Halifax, who held the Privy Seal, had opposed that bill with unrivalled powers of argument and eloquence. But Halifax was the mortal enemy of despotism and of Popery. He saw with dread the progress of the French arms on the Con-

* Burnet, i. 628.; Lestrange, Observator, Feb. 11. 1684.

Digitized by Google

tinent, and the influence of French gold in the counsels of England. Had his advice been followed, the laws would have been strictly observed: clemency would have been extended to the vanquished Whigs: the Parliament would have been convoked in due season: an attempt would have been made to reconcile our domestic factions; and the principles of the Triple Alliance would again have guided our foreign policy. He had therefore incurred the bitter animosity of James. The Lord Keeper Guildford could hardly be said to belong to either of the parties into which the court was divided. He could by no means be called a friend of liberty; and yet he had so great a reverence for the letter of the law that he was not a serviceable tool of arbitrary power. He was accordingly designated by the vehement Tories as a Trimmer, and was to James an object of aversion with which contempt was largely mingled. Ormond, who was Lord Steward of the Household and Viceroy of Ireland, then resided at Dublin. His claims on the royal gratitude were superior to those of any other subject. He had fought bravely for Charles the First: he had shared the exile of Charles the Second; and, since the Restoration, he had, in spite of many provocations, kept his loyalty unstained. Though he had been disgraced during the predominance of the Cabal, he had never gone into factious opposition, and had, in the days of the Popish Plot and the Exclusion Bill, been foremost among the supporters of the throne. He was now old, and had been recently tried by the most cruel of all calamities. He had followed to the grave a son who should have been his own chief mourner, the gallant Ossory. The eminent services, the venerable age, and the domestic misfortunes of Ormond made him an object of general interest to the nation. The Cavaliers regarded him as, both by right of seniority and by right of merit, their head; and the Whigs knew that, faithful as he

Digitized by Google

had always been to the cause of monarchy, he was no friend either to Popery or to arbitrary power. But, high as he stood in the public estimation, he had little favour to expect from his new master. James, indeed, while still a subject, had urged his brother to make a complete change in the Irish administration. Charles had assented; and it had been arranged that, in a few months, there should be a new Lord Lieutenant.*

Rochester was the only member of the cabinet who stood high in the favour of the King. The general expectation was that he would be immediately placed at the head of affairs, and that all the other great officers of state would be changed. This expectation proved to be well founded in part only. Rochester was declared Lord Treasurer, and thus became prime minister. Neither a Lord High Admiral nor a Board of Admiralty was appointed. The new King, who loved the details of naval business, and would have made a respectable clerk in the dockyard at Chatham, determined to be his own minister of marine. Under him the management of that important department was confided to Samuel Pepys, whose library and diary have kept his name fresh to our time. No servant of the late sovereign was publicly disgraced. Sunderland exerted so much art and address, employed so many intercessors, and was in possession of so many secrets, that he was suffered to retain his seals. Godolphin's obsequiousness, industry, experience, and taciturnity, could ill be spared. As he was no longer wanted at the Treasury, he was made Chamberlain to the Queen. With these three Lords the King took counsel on all important questions. As to Halifax, Ormond, and Guildford, he determined not yet to dismiss them, but merely to humble and annoy them.

New arrangements.

* The letters which passed between Rochester and Ormond on this subject will be found in the Clarendon Correspondence.

Digitized by Google

Halifax was told that he must give up the Privy Seal and accept the Presidency of the Council. He submitted with extreme reluctance. For, though the President of the Council had always taken precedence of the Lord Privy Seal, the Lord Privy Seal was, in that age, a much more important officer than the Lord President. Rochester had not forgotten the jest which had been made a few months before on his own removal from the Treasury, and enjoyed in his turn the pleasure of kicking his rival up stairs. The Privy Seal was delivered to Rochester's elder brother, Henry Earl of Clarendon.

To Barillon James expressed the strongest dislike of Halifax. "I know him well, I never can trust him. He shall have no share in the management of public business. As to the place which I have given him, it will just serve to show how little influence he has." But to Halifax it was thought convenient to hold a very different language. "All the past is forgotten," said the King, "except the service which you did me in the debate on the Exclusion Bill." This speech has often been cited to prove that James was not so vindictive as he had been called by his enemies. It seems rather to prove that he by no means deserved the praises which have been bestowed on his sincerity by his friends.*

Ormond was politely informed that his services were no longer needed in Ireland, and was invited to repair to Whitehall, and to perform the functions of Lord Steward. He dutifully submitted, but did not affect to deny that the new arrangement wounded his feelings deeply. On the eve of his departure he gave a magnificent banquet at Kilmainham Hospital, then just completed, to the officers of the garrison of

* The ministerial changes are announced in the London Gazette, Feb. 19. 168½. See Burnet. i. 621.; Barillon, Feb. $\frac{9}{19}$. $\frac{16}{26}$.; and Feb. 19. Mar. 1.

Digitized by Google

Dublin. After dinner he rose, filled a goblet to the brim with wine, and, holding it up, asked whether he had spilt one drop. "No, gentlemen: whatever the courtiers may say, I am not yet sunk into dotage. My hand does not fail me yet; and my hand is not steadier than my heart. To the health of King James!" Such was the last farewell of Ormond to Ireland. He left the administration in the hands of Lords Justices, and repaired to London, where he was received with unusual marks of public respect. Many persons of rank went forth to meet him on the road. A long train of equipages followed him into Saint James's Square, where his mansion stood; and the Square was thronged by a multitude which greeted him with loud acclamations.*

The Great Seal was left in Guildford's custody: but a marked indignity was at the same time offered to him. It was determined that another lawyer of more vigour and audacity should be called to assist in the administration. The person selected was Sir George Jeffreys, Chief Justice of the Court of King's Bench. The depravity of this man has passed into a proverb. Both the great English parties have attacked his memory with emulous violence: for the Whigs considered him as their most barbarous enemy; and the Tories found it convenient to throw on him the blame of all the crimes which had sullied their triumph. A diligent and candid enquiry will show that some frightful stories which have been told concerning him are false or exaggerated. Yet the dispassionate historian will be able to make very little deduction from the vast mass of infamy with which the memory of the wicked judge has been loaded.

Sir George Jeffreys.

He was a man of quick and vigorous parts, but

* Carte's Life of Ormond; Secret Consults of the Romish Party in Ireland, 1690; Memoirs of Ireland, 1716.

Digitized by Google

constitutionally prone to insolence and to the angry passions. When just emerging from boyhood he had risen into practice at the Old Bailey bar, a bar where advocates have always used a license of tongue unknown in Westminster Hall. Here, during many years, his chief business was to examine and cross-examine the most hardened miscreants of a great capital. Daily conflicts with prostitutes and thieves called out and exercised his powers so effectually that he became the most consummate bully ever known in his profession. Tenderness for others and respect for himself were feelings alike unknown to him. He acquired a boundless command of the rhetoric in which the vulgar express hatred and contempt. The profusion of maledictions and vituperative epithets which composed his vocabulary could hardly have been rivalled in the fishmarket or the beargarden. His countenance and his voice must always have been unamiable. But these natural advantages,—for such he seems to have thought them, — he had improved to such a degree that there were few who, in his paroxysms of rage, could see or hear him without emotion. Impudence and ferocity sate upon his brow. The glare of his eyes had a fascination for the unhappy victim on whom they were fixed. Yet his brow and his eye were less terrible than the savage lines of his mouth. His yell of fury, as was said by one who had often heard it, sounded like the thunder of the judgment day. These qualifications he carried, while still a young man, from the bar to the bench. He early became Common Serjeant, and then Recorder of London. As a judge at the City sessions he exhibited the same propensities which afterwards, in a higher post, gained for him an unenviable immortality. Already might be remarked in him the most odious vice which is incident to human nature, a delight in misery merely as misery. There was a fiendish exultation in the way

Digitized by Google

in which he pronounced sentence on offenders. Their weeping and imploring seemed to titillate him voluptuously; and he loved to scare them into fits by dilating with luxuriant amplification on all the details of what they were to suffer. Thus, when he had an opportunity of ordering an unlucky adventuress to be whipped at the cart's tail, "Hangman," he would exclaim, "I charge you to pay particular attention to this lady! Scourge her soundly, man! Scourge her till the blood runs down! It is Christmas, a cold time for Madam to strip in! See that you warm her shoulders thoroughly!"* He was hardly less facetious when he passed judgment on poor Lodowick Muggleton, the drunken tailor who fancied himself a prophet. "Impudent rogue!" roared Jeffreys, "thou shalt have an easy, easy, easy punishment!" One part of this easy punishment was the pillory, in which the wretched fanatic was almost killed with brickbats.†

By this time the heart of Jeffreys had been hardened to that temper which tyrants require in their worst implements. He had hitherto looked for professional advancement to the corporation of London. He had therefore professed himself a Roundhead, and had always appeared to be in a higher state of exhilaration when he explained to Popish priests that they were to be cut down alive, and were to see their own bowels burned, than when he passed ordinary sentences of death. But, as soon as he had got all that the City could give, he made haste to sell his forehead of brass and his tongue of venom to the Court. Chiffinch, who was accustomed to act

* Christmas Sessions Paper of 1678.

† The Acts of the Witnesses of the Spirit, part v. chapter v. In this work, Lodowick, after his fashion, revenges himself on the "bawling devil," as he calls Jeffreys, by a string of curses which Ernulphus, or Jeffreys himself, might have envied. The trial was in January 1677.

Digitized by Google

as broker in infamous contracts of more than one kind, lent his aid. He had conducted many amorous and many political intrigues; but he assuredly never rendered a more scandalous service to his masters than when he introduced Jeffreys to Whitehall. The renegade soon found a patron in the obdurate and revengeful James, but was always regarded with scorn and disgust by Charles, whose faults, great as they were, had no affinity with insolence and cruelty. "That man," said the King, "has no learning, no sense, no manners, and more impudence than ten carted street-walkers." * Work was to be done, however, which could be trusted to no man who reverenced law or was sensible of shame; and thus Jeffreys, at an age at which a barrister thinks himself fortunate if he is employed to conduct an important cause, was made Chief Justice of the King's Bench.

His enemies could not deny that he possessed some of the qualities of a great judge. His legal knowledge, indeed, was merely such as he had picked up in practice of no very high kind. But he had one of those happily constituted intellects which, across labyrinths of sophistry, and through masses of immaterial facts, go straight to the true point. Of his intellect, however, he seldom had the full use. Even in civil causes his malevolent and despotic temper perpetually disordered his judgment. To enter his court was to enter the den of a wild beast, which none could tame, and which was as likely to be roused to rage by caresses as by attacks. He frequently poured forth on plaintiffs and defendants, barristers and attorneys, witnesses and jurymen, torrents of frantic abuse, intermixed with oaths and curses. His looks and tones had inspired terror when he was merely a young advocate struggling into practice. Now that

* This saying is to be found in many contemporary pamphlets. Titus Oates was never tired of quoting it. See his Εἰκὼν Βασιλική.

Digitized by Google

he was at the head of the most formidable tribunal in the realm, there were few indeed who did not tremble before him. Even when he was sober, his violence was sufficiently frightful. But in general his reason was overclouded and his evil passions stimulated by the fumes of intoxication. His evenings were ordinarily given to revelry. People who saw him only over his bottle would have supposed him to be a man gross indeed, sottish, and addicted to low company and low merriment, but social and goodhumoured. He was constantly surrounded on such occasions by buffoons selected, for the most part, from among the vilest pettifoggers who practised before him. These men bantered and abused each other for his entertainment. He joined in their ribald talk, sang catches with them, and, when his head grew hot, hugged and kissed them in an ecstasy of drunken fondness. But though wine at first seemed to soften his heart, the effect a few hours later was very different. He often came to the judgment seat, having kept the court waiting long, and yet having but half slept off his debauch, his cheeks on fire, his eyes staring like those of a maniac. When he was in this state, his boon companions of the preceding night, if they were wise, kept out of his way: for the recollection of the familiarity to which he had admitted them inflamed his malignity; and he was sure to take every opportunity of overwhelming them with execration and invective. Not the least odious of his many odious peculiarities was the pleasure which he took in publicly browbeating and mortifying those whom, in his fits of maudlin tenderness, he had encouraged to presume on his favour.

The services which the government had expected from him were performed, not merely without flinching, but eagerly and triumphantly. His first exploit was the judicial murder of Algernon Sidney. What followed was in perfect harmony with this beginning.

Digitized by Google

Respectable Tories lamented the disgrace which the barbarity and indecency of so great a functionary brought upon the administration of justice. But the excesses which filled such men with horror were titles to the esteem of James. Jeffreys, therefore, very soon after the death of Charles, obtained a seat in the cabinet and a peerage. This last honour was a signal mark of royal approbation. For, since the judicial system of the realm had been remodelled in the thirteenth century, no Chief Justice had been a Lord of Parliament.*

Guildford now found himself superseded in all his political functions, and restricted to his business as a judge in equity. At Council he was treated by Jeffreys with marked incivility. The whole legal patronage was in the hands of the Chief Justice; and it was well known by the bar that the surest way to propitiate the Chief Justice was to treat the Lord Keeper with disrespect.

The revenue collected without an Act of Parliament.

James had not been many hours King when a dispute arose between the two heads of the law. The customs had been settled on Charles for life only, and could not therefore be legally exacted by the new sovereign. Some weeks must elapse before a House of Commons could be chosen. If, in the meantime, the duties were suspended, the revenue would suffer; the regular course of trade would be interrupted; the consumer would derive no benefit; and the only gainers would be those fortunate speculators whose cargoes might happen

* The chief sources of information concerning Jeffreys are the State Trials and North's Life of Lord Guildford. Some touches of minor importance I owe to contemporary pamphlets in verse and prose. Such are the Bloody Assizes, the Life and Death of George Lord Jeffreys, the Panegyric on the late Lord Jeffreys, the Letter to the Lord Chancellor, Jeffreys's Elegy. See also Evelyn's Diary, Dec. 5. 1683, Oct. 31. 1685. I scarcely need advise every reader to consult Lord Campbell's excellent Life of Jeffreys.

Digitized by Google

to arrive during the interval between the demise of the crown and the meeting of the Parliament. The Treasury was besieged by merchants whose warehouses were filled with goods on which duty had been paid, and who were in grievous apprehension of being undersold and ruined. Impartial men must admit that this was one of those cases in which a government may be justified in deviating from the strictly constitutional course. But when it is necessary to deviate from the strictly constitutional course, the deviation clearly ought to be no greater than the necessity requires. Guildford felt this, and gave advice which did him honour. He proposed that the duties should be levied, but should be kept in the Exchequer apart from other sums till the Parliament should meet. In this way the King, while violating the letter of the laws, would show that he wished to conform to their spirit. Jeffreys gave very different counsel. He advised James to put forth an edict declaring it to be His Majesty's will and pleasure that the customs should continue to be paid. This advice was well suited to the King's temper. The judicious proposition of the Lord Keeper was rejected as worthy only of a Whig, or of what was still worse, a Trimmer. A proclamation, such as the Chief Justice had suggested, appeared. Some people expected that a violent outbreak of public indignation would be the consequence: but they were deceived. The spirit of opposition had not yet revived; and the court might safely venture to take steps which, five years before, would have produced a rebellion. In the City of London, lately so turbulent, scarcely a murmur was heard.*

The proclamation, which announced that the customs would still be levied, announced also that a Parliament would shortly meet. It

A Parliament called.

* London Gazette, Feb. 12. 168½. North's Life of Guildford, 254.

Digitized by Google

was not without many misgivings that James had determined to call the Estates of his realm together. The moment was, indeed, most auspicious for a general election. Never since the accession of the House of Stuart had the constituent bodies been so favourably disposed towards the Court. But the new sovereign's mind was haunted by an apprehension not to be mentioned, even at this distance of time, without shame and indignation. He was afraid that by summoning his Parliament he might incur the displeasure of the King of France.

Transactions between James and the French King.

To the King of France it mattered little which of the two English factions triumphed at the elections: for all the Parliaments which had met since the Restoration, whatever might have been their temper as to domestic politics, had been jealous of the growing power of the House of Bourbon. On this subject there was little difference between the Whigs and the sturdy country gentlemen who formed the main strength of the Tory party. Lewis had therefore spared neither bribes nor menaces to prevent Charles from convoking the Houses; and James, who had from the first been in the secret of his brother's foreign politics, had, in becoming King of England, become also a hireling and vassal of France.

Rochester, Godolphin, and Sunderland, who now formed the interior cabinet, were perfectly aware that their late master had been in the habit of receiving money from the court of Versailles. They were consulted by James as to the expediency of convoking the legislature. They acknowledged the importance of keeping Lewis in good humour: but it seemed to them that the calling of a Parliament was not a matter of choice. Patient as the nation appeared to be, there were limits to its patience. The principle, that the money of the subject could not be lawfully taken by the King without the assent of the Com-

Digitized by Google

mons, was firmly rooted in the public mind; and though, on an extraordinary emergency, even Whigs might be willing to pay, during a few weeks, duties not imposed by statute, it was certain that even Tories would become refractory if such irregular taxation should continue longer than the special circumstances which alone justified it. The Houses then must meet; and, since it was so, the sooner they were summoned the better. Even the short delay which would be occasioned by a reference to Versailles might produce irreparable mischief. Discontent and suspicion would spread fast through society. Halifax would complain that the fundamental principles of the constitution were violated. The Lord Keeper, like a cowardly pedantic special pleader as he was, would take the same side. What might have been done with a good grace would at last be done with a bad grace. Those very ministers whom His Majesty most wished to lower in the public estimation would gain popularity at his expense. The ill temper of the nation might seriously affect the result of the elections. These arguments were unanswerable. The King therefore notified to the country his intention of holding a Parliament. But he was painfully anxious to exculpate himself from the guilt of having acted undutifully and disrespectfully towards France. He led Barillon into a private room, and there apologised for having dared to take so important a step without the previous sanction of Lewis. "Assure your master," said James, "of my gratitude and attachment. I know that without his protection I can do nothing. I know what troubles my brother brought on himself by not adhering steadily to France. I will take good care not to let the Houses meddle with foreign affairs. If I see in them any disposition to make mischief, I will send them about their business. Explain this to my good brother. I hope that he will not take it amiss that

Digitized by Google

I have acted without consulting him. He has a right to be consulted; and it is my wish to consult him about everything. But in this case the delay even of a week might have produced serious consequences."

These ignominious excuses were, on the following morning, repeated by Rochester. Barillon received them civilly. Rochester, grown bolder, proceeded to ask for money. "It will be well laid out," he said: "your master cannot employ his revenues better. Represent to him strongly how important it is that the King of England should be dependent, not on his own people, but on the friendship of France alone." *

Barillon hastened to communicate to Lewis the wishes of the English government; but Lewis had already anticipated them. His first act, after he was apprised of the death of Charles, was to collect bills of exchange on England to the amount of five hundred thousand livres, a sum equivalent to about thirty-seven thousand five hundred pounds sterling. Such bills were not then to be easily procured in Paris at a day's notice. In a few hours, however, the purchase was effected, and a courier started for London.† As soon as Barillon received the remittance, he flew to Whitehall, and communicated the welcome news. James was not ashamed to shed, or pretend to shed, tears of delight and gratitude. "Nobody but your King," he said, "does such kind, such noble things. I never can be grateful enough. Assure him that my attachment will last to the end of my days." Rochester, Sunderland, and Godolphin came, one after another, to embrace the ambassador,

* The chief authority for these transactions is Barillon's despatch of February $\frac{8}{19}$. 1685. It will be found in the Appendix to Mr. Fox's History. See also Preston's letter to James, dated April $\frac{18}{28}$. 1635, in Dalrymple.

† Lewis to Barillon, Feb. $\frac{13}{23}$ 1685.

Digitized by Google

and to whisper to him that he had given new life to their royal master.*

But though James and his three advisers were pleased with the promptitude which Lewis had shown, they were by no means satisfied with the amount of the donation. As they were afraid, however, that they might give offence by importunate mendicancy, they merely hinted their wishes. They declared that they had no intention of haggling with so generous a benefactor as the French King, and that they were willing to trust entirely to his munificence. They, at the same time, attempted to propitiate him by a large sacrifice of national honour. It was well known that one chief end of his politics was to add the Belgian provinces to his dominions. England was bound by a treaty, which had been concluded with Spain when Danby was Lord Treasurer, to resist any attempt which France might make on those provinces. The three ministers informed Barillon that their master considered that treaty as no longer obligatory. It had been made, they said, by Charles: it might, perhaps, have been binding on him; but his brother did not think himself bound by it. The most Christian King might, therefore, without any fear of opposition from England, proceed to annex Brabant and Hainault to his empire.†

Churchill sent ambassador to France.

It was at the same time resolved that an extraordinary embassy should be sent to assure Lewis of the gratitude and affection of James. For this mission was selected a man who did not as yet occupy a very eminent position, but whose renown, strangely made up of infamy and glory, filled at a later period the whole civilised world.

His history.

Soon after the Restoration, in the gay and dissolute times which have been celebrated by the lively pen of Hamilton, James, young and

* Barillon, Feb. $\frac{14}{24}$. 1685. † Barillon, Feb. $\frac{14}{24}$. 1685.

Digitized by Google

ardent in the pursuit of pleasure, had been attracted by Arabella Churchill, one of the maids of honour who waited on his first wife. The young lady was plain: but the taste of James was not nice: and she became his avowed mistress. She was the daughter of a poor Cavalier knight who haunted Whitehall, and made himself ridiculous by publishing a dull and affected folio, long forgotten, in praise of monarchy and monarchs. The necessities of the Churchills were pressing: their loyalty was ardent; and their only feeling about Arabella's seduction seems to have been joyful surprise that so homely a girl should have attained such high preferment.

Her interest was indeed of great use to her relations: but none of them was so fortunate as her eldest brother John, a fine youth, who carried a pair of colours in the foot guards. He rose fast in the court and in the army, and was early distinguished as a man of fashion and of pleasure. His stature was commanding, his face handsome, his address singularly winning, yet of such dignity that the most impertinent fops never ventured to take any liberty with him; his temper, even in the most vexatious and irritating circumstances, always under perfect command. His education had been so much neglected that he could not spell the most common words of his own language: but his acute and vigorous understanding amply supplied the place of book learning. He was not talkative: but, when he was forced to speak in public, his natural eloquence moved the envy of practised rhetoricians.* His courage was singularly cool and imperturbable. During many years of anxiety and peril, he never, in any emergency, lost, even for a moment, the perfect use of his admirable judgment.

In his twenty-third year he was sent with his regiment to join the French forces, then engaged in

* Swift who hated Marlborough, and who was little disposed to allow any merit to those whom he hated, says, in the famous letter to Crassus, "You are no ill orator in the Senate."

Digitized by Google

operations against Holland. His serene intrepidity distinguished him among thousands of brave soldiers. His professional skill commanded the respect of veteran officers. He was publicly thanked at the head of the army, and received many marks of esteem and confidence from Turenne, who was then at the height of military glory.

Unhappily the splendid qualities of John Churchill were mingled with alloy of the most sordid kind. Some propensities, which in youth are singularly ungraceful, began very early to show themselves in him. He was thrifty in his very vices, and levied ample contributions on ladies enriched by the spoils of more liberal lovers. He was, during a short time, the object of the violent but fickle fondness of the Duchess of Cleveland. On one occasion he was caught with her by the King, and was forced to leap out of the window. She rewarded this hazardous feat of gallantry with a present of five thousand pounds. With this sum the prudent young hero instantly bought an annuity of five hundred a year, well secured on landed property.* Already his private drawer contained a hoard of broad pieces which, fifty years later, when he was a Duke, a Prince of the Empire, and the richest subject in Europe, remained untouched.†

After the close of the war he was attached to the household of the Duke of York, accompanied his patron to the Low Countries and to Edinburgh, and was rewarded for his services with a Scotch peerage and with the command of the only regiment of

* Dartmouth's note on Burnet, i. 264. Chesterfield's Letters, Nov. 18. 1748. Chesterfield is an unexceptionable witness; for the annuity was a charge on the estate of his grandfather, Halifax. I believe that there is no foundation for a disgraceful addition to the story which may be found in Pope:

"The gallant, too, to whom she paid it down,
Lived to refuse his mistress half a crown."

Curl calls this a piece of travelling scandal.

† Pope in Spence's Anecdotes.

Digitized by Google

dragoons which was then on the English establishment.* His wife had a post in the family of James's younger daughter, the Princess of Denmark.

Lord Churchill was now sent as ambassador extraordinary to Versailles. He had it in charge to express the warm gratitude of the English government for the money which had been so generously bestowed. It had been originally intended that he should, at the same time, ask Lewis for a much larger sum; but, on full consideration, it was apprehended that such indelicate greediness might disgust the benefactor whose spontaneous liberality had been so signally displayed. Churchill was therefore directed to confine himself to thanks for what was past, and to say nothing about the future.†

But James and his ministers, even while protesting that they did not mean to be importunate, contrived to hint, very intelligibly, what they wished and expected. In the French ambassador they had a dexterous, a zealous, and, perhaps, not a disinterested intercessor. Lewis made some difficulties, probably with the design of enhancing the value of his gifts. In a very few weeks, however, Barillon received from Versailles fifteen hundred thousand livres more. This sum, equivalent to about a hundred and twelve thousand pounds sterling, he was instructed to dole out cautiously. He was authorised to furnish the English government with thirty thousand pounds, for the purpose of corrupting members of the new House of Commons. The rest he was directed to keep in reserve for some extraordinary emergency, such as a dissolution or an insurrection.‡

* See the Historical Records of the First or Royal Dragoons. The appointment of Churchill to the command of this regiment was ridiculed as an instance of absurd partiality. One lampoon of that time, which I do not remember to have seen in print, but of which a manuscript copy is in the British Museum, contains these lines:

"Let's cut our meat with spoons:
The sense is as good
As that Churchill should
Be put to command the dragoons."

† Barillon, Feb. $\frac{18}{28}$. 1685.

‡ Barillon, April $\frac{6}{16}$.; Lewis to Barillon, April $\frac{11}{21}$.

Digitized by Google

The turpitude of these transactions is universally acknowledged: but their real nature seems to be often misunderstood: for, though the foreign policy of the last two Kings of the House of Stuart has never, since the correspondence of Barillon was exposed to the public eye, found an apologist among us, there is still a party which labours to excuse their domestic policy. Yet it is certain that between their domestic policy and their foreign policy there was a necessary and indissoluble connection. If they had upheld, during a single year, the honour of the country abroad, they would have been compelled to change the whole system of their administration at home. To praise them for refusing to govern in conformity with the sense of Parliament, and yet to blame them for submitting to the dictation of Lewis, is inconsistent. For they had only one choice, to be dependent on Lewis, or to be dependent on Parliament.

James, to do him justice, would gladly have found out a third way: but there was none. He became the slave of France: but it would be incorrect to represent him as a contented slave. He had spirit enough to be at times angry with himself for submitting to such thraldom, and impatient to break loose from it; and this disposition was studiously encouraged by the agents of many foreign powers.

Feelings of the Continental governments towards England.

His accession had excited hopes and fears in every Continental court: and the commencement of his administration was watched by strangers with interest scarcely less deep than that which was felt by his own subjects. One government alone wished that the troubles which had, during three generations, distracted England, might be eternal. All other governments, whether republican or monarchical, whether Protestant or Roman Catholic, wished to see those troubles happily terminated.

Digitized by Google

The nature of the long contest between the Stuarts and their Parliaments was indeed very imperfectly apprehended by foreign statesmen: but no statesman could fail to perceive the effect which that contest had produced on the balance of power in Europe. In ordinary circumstances, the sympathies of the courts of Vienna and Madrid would doubtless have been with a prince struggling against subjects, and especially with a Roman Catholic prince struggling against heretical subjects: but all such sympathies were now overpowered by a stronger feeling. The fear and hatred inspired by the greatness, the injustice, and the arrogance of the French King were at the height. His neighbours might well doubt whether it were more dangerous to be at war or at peace with him. For in peace he continued to plunder and to outrage them; and they had tried the chances of war against him in vain. In this perplexity they looked with intense anxiety towards England. Would she act on the principles of the Triple Alliance or on the principles of the treaty of Dover? On that issue depended the fate of all her neighbours. With her help Lewis might yet be withstood: but no help could be expected from her till she was at unity with herself. Before the strife between the throne and the Parliament began, she had been a power of the first rank: on the day on which that strife terminated she became a power of the first rank again: but while the dispute remained undecided, she was condemned to inaction and to vassalage. She had been great under the Plantagenets and Tudors: she was again great under the princes who reigned after the Revolution: but, under the Kings of the House of Stuart, she was a blank in the map of Europe. She had lost one class of energies, and had not yet acquired another. That species of force, which, in the fourteenth century, had enabled her to humble France and Spain, had ceased to exist. That species of force, which, in

Digitized by Google

the eighteenth century, humbled France and Spain once more, had not yet been called into action. The government was no longer a limited monarchy after the fashion of the middle ages. It had not yet become a limited monarchy after the modern fashion. With the vices of two different systems it had the strength of neither. The elements of our polity, instead of combining in harmony, counteracted and neutralised each other. All was transition, conflict, and disorder. The chief business of the sovereign was to infringe the privileges of the legislature. The chief business of the legislature was to encroach on the prerogatives of the sovereign. The King readily accepted foreign aid, which relieved him from the misery of being dependent on a mutinous Parliament. The Parliament refused to the King the means of supporting the national honour abroad, from an apprehension, too well founded, that those means might be employed in order to establish despotism at home. The effect of these jealousies was that our country, with all her vast resources, was of as little weight in Christendom as the duchy of Savoy or the duchy of Lorraine, and certainly of far less weight than the small province of Holland.

France was deeply interested in prolonging this state of things.* All other powers were deeply in-

* I might transcribe half Barillon's correspondence in proof of this proposition: but I will quote only one passage, in which the policy of the French government towards England is exhibited concisely and with perfect clearness.

"On peut tenir pour un maxime indubitable que l'accord du Roy d'Angleterre avec son parlement, en quelque manière qu'il se fasse, n'est pas conforme aux intérêts de V. M. Je me contente de penser cela sans m'en ouvrir à personne, et je cache avec soin mes sentimens à cet égard." —Barillon to Lewis, $\frac{\text{Feb. 28.}}{\text{Mar. 10.}}$ 1687. That this was the real secret of the whole policy of Lewis towards our country was perfectly understood at Vienna. The Emperor Leopold wrote thus to James, $\frac{\text{March 30.}}{\text{April 9.}}$ 1689: "Galli id unum agebant, ut, perpetuas inter Serenitatem vestram et ejusdem populos fovendo simultates, reliquæ Christianæ Europæ tanto securius insultarent."

Digitized by Google

terested in bringing it to a close. The general wish of Europe was that James would govern in conformity with law and with public opinion. From the Escurial itself came letters, expressing an earnest hope that the new King of England would be on good terms with his Parliament and his people.* From the Vatican itself came cautions against immoderate zeal for the Roman Catholic faith. Benedict Odescalchi, who filled the papal chair under the name of Innocent the Eleventh, felt, in his character of temporal sovereign, all those apprehensions with which other princes watched the progress of the French power. He had also grounds of uneasiness which were peculiar to himself. It was a happy circumstance for the Protestant religion that, at the moment when the last Roman Catholic King of England mounted the throne, the Roman Catholic Church was torn by dissension, and threatened with a new schism. A quarrel similar to that which had raged in the eleventh century between the Emperors and the Supreme Pontiffs had arisen between Lewis and Innocent. Lewis, zealous even to bigotry for the doctrines of the Church of Rome, but tenacious of his regal authority, accused the Pope of encroaching on the secular rights of the French Crown, and was in turn accused by the Pope of encroaching on the spiritual power of the keys. The King, haughty as he was, encountered a spirit even more determined than his own. Innocent was, in all private relations, the meekest and gentlest of men: but, when he spoke officially from the chair of Saint Peter, he spoke in the

Policy of the court of Rome.

* "Que sea unido con su reyno, y en todo buena intelligencia con el parlamento."—Despatch from the King of Spain to Don Pedro Ronquillo, March $\frac{13}{23}$. 1685. This despatch is in the archives of Simancas, which contain a great mass of papers relating to English affairs. Copies of the most interesting of those papers are in the possession of M. Guizot, and were by him lent to me. It is with peculiar pleasure that, at this time, I acknowledge this mark of the friendship of so great a man. (1848.)

Digitized by Google

tones of Gregory the Seventh and of Sixtus the Fifth. The dispute became serious. Agents of the King were excommunicated. Adherents of the Pope were banished. The King made the champions of his authority Bishops. The Pope refused them institution. They took possession of the episcopal palaces and revenues: but they were incompetent to perform the episcopal functions. Before the struggle terminated, there were in France thirty prelates who could not confirm or ordain.*

Had any prince then living, except Lewis, been engaged in such a dispute with the Vatican, he would have had all Protestant governments on his side. But the fear and resentment which the ambition and insolence of the French King had inspired were such that whoever had the courage manfully to oppose him was sure of public sympathy. Even Lutherans and Calvinists, who had always detested the Pope, could not refrain from wishing him success against a tyrant who aimed at universal monarchy. It was thus that, in the present century, many who regarded Pius the Seventh as Antichrist were well pleased to see Antichrist confront the gigantic power of Napoleon.

The resentment which Innocent felt towards France disposed him to take a mild and liberal view of the affairs of England. The return of the English people to the fold of which he was the shepherd would undoubtedly have rejoiced his soul. But he was too wise a man to believe that a nation, so bold and stubborn, could be brought back to the Church of Rome by the violent and unconstitutional exercise of royal authority. It was not difficult to foresee that, if James attempted to promote the interests of his religion by illegal and unpopular means, the attempt

* Few English readers will be desirous to go deep into the history of this quarrel. Summaries will be found in Cardinal Bausset's Life of Bossuet, and in Voltaire's Age of Lewis XIV.

Digitized by Google

would fail; the hatred with which the heretical islanders regarded the true faith would become fiercer and stronger than ever; and an indissoluble association would be created in their minds between Protestantism and civil freedom, between Popery and arbitrary power. In the meantime the King would be an object of aversion and suspicion to his people. England would still be, as she had been under James the First, under Charles the First, and under Charles the Second, a power of the third rank; and France would domineer unchecked beyond the Alps and the Rhine. On the other hand, it was probable that James, by acting with prudence and moderation, by strictly observing the laws, and by exerting himself to win the confidence of his Parliament, might be able to obtain, for the professors of his religion, a large measure of relief. Penal statutes would go first. Statutes imposing civil incapacities would soon follow. In the meantime, the English King and the English nation united might head the European coalition, and might oppose an insuperable barrier to the cupidity of Lewis.

Innocent was confirmed in his judgment by the principal Englishmen who resided at his court. Of these the most illustrious was Philip Howard, sprung from the noblest houses of Britain, grandson, on one side, of an Earl of Arundel, on the other, of a Duke of Lennox. Philip had long been a member of the sacred college: he was commonly designated as the Cardinal of England; and he was the chief counsellor of the Holy See in matters relating to his country. He had been driven into exile by the outcry of Protestant bigots; and a member of his family, the unfortunate Stafford, had fallen a victim to their rage. But neither the Cardinal's own wrongs, nor those of his house, had so heated his mind as to make him a rash adviser. Every letter, therefore, which went from the Vatican to Whitehall, recommended patience,

Digitized by Google

moderation, and respect for the prejudices of the English people.*

In the mind of James there was a great conflict. We should do him injustice if we supposed that a state of vassalage was agreeable to his temper. He loved authority and business. He had a high sense of his own personal dignity. Nay, he was not altogether destitute of a sentiment which bore some affinity to patriotism. It galled his soul to think that the kingdom which he ruled was of far less account in the world than many states which possessed smaller natural advantages; and he listened eagerly to foreign ministers when they urged him to assert the dignity of his rank, to place himself at the head of a great confederacy, to become the protector of injured nations, and to tame the pride of that power which held the Continent in awe. Such exhortations made his heart swell with emotions unknown to his careless and effeminate brother. But those emotions were soon subdued by a stronger feeling. A vigorous foreign policy necessarily implied a conciliatory domestic policy. It was impossible at once to confront the might of France and to trample on the liberties of England. The executive government could undertake nothing great without the support of the Commons, and could obtain their support only by acting in conformity with their opinion. Thus James found that the two things which he most desired could not be enjoyed together. His second wish was to be feared and respected abroad. But his first wish was to be absolute master at home. Between the incompatible objects on which his heart was set, he, for a time, went irresolutely to and fro. The conflict in his own breast gave to his public acts a strange appearance of

Struggle in the mind of James.

Fluctuations of his policy.

* Burnet, i. 661., and Letter from Rome; Dodd's Church History, part viii. book i. art. 1.

Digitized by Google

indecision and insincerity. Those who, without the clue, attempted to explore the maze of his politics were unable to understand how the same man could be, in the same week, so haughty and so mean. Even Lewis was perplexed by the vagaries of an ally who passed, in a few hours, from homage to defiance, and from defiance to homage. Yet, now that the whole conduct of James is before us, this inconsistency seems to admit of a simple explanation.

At the moment of his accession he was in doubt whether the kingdom would peaceably submit to his authority. The Exclusionists, lately so powerful, might rise in arms against him. He might be in great need of French money and French troops. He was therefore, during some days, content to be a sycophant and a mendicant. He humbly apologised for daring to call his Parliament together without the consent of the French government. He begged hard for a French subsidy. He wept with joy over the French bills of exchange. He sent to Versailles a special embassy charged with assurances of his gratitude, attachment, and submission. But scarcely had the embassy departed when his feelings underwent a change. He had been everywhere proclaimed without one riot, without one seditious outcry. From all corners of the island he received intelligence that his subjects were tranquil and obedient. His spirit rose. The degrading relation in which he stood to a foreign power seemed intolerable. He became proud, punctilious, boastful, quarrelsome. He held such high language about the dignity of his crown and the balance of power that his whole court fully expected a complete revolution in the foreign politics of the realm. He commanded Churchill to send home a minute report of the ceremonial of Versailles, in order that the honours with which the English embassy was received there might be repaid, and not more than repaid, to the representative of France at

Digitized by Google

Whitehall. The news of this change was received with delight at Madrid, Vienna, and the Hague.* Lewis was at first merely diverted. "My good ally talks big," he said; "but he is as fond of my pistoles as ever his brother was." Soon, however, the altered demeanour of James, and the hopes with which that demeanour inspired both the branches of the House of Austria, began to call for more serious notice. A remarkable letter is still extant, in which the French King intimated a strong suspicion that he had been duped, and that the very money which he had sent to Westminster would be employed against him.†

By this time England had recovered from the sadness and anxiety caused by the death of the good-natured Charles. The Tories were loud in professions of attachment to their new master. The hatred of the Whigs was kept down by fear. That great mass which is not steadily Whig or Tory, but which inclines alternately to Whiggism and to Toryism, was still on the Tory side. The reaction which had followed the dissolution of the Oxford parliament had not yet spent its force.

Public celebration of the Roman Catholic rites in the palace.

The King early put the loyalty of his Protestant friends to the proof. While he was a subject, he had been in the habit of hearing mass with closed doors in a small oratory which had been fitted up for his wife. He now ordered the doors to be thrown open, in order that all who came to pay their duty to him might see the ceremony. When the host was elevated there was a strange confusion in the antechamber. The Roman Catholics fell on their knees: the Protestants hurried out of the room. Soon a new pulpit was erected in the palace; and, during Lent, a series of

* Consultations of the Spanish Council of State on April $\frac{3}{13}$. and April $\frac{14}{24}$. 1685, in the Archives of Simancas.

† Lewis to Barillon, $\frac{\text{May } 22.}{\text{June } 1.}$ 1685; Burnet, i. 623.

Digitized by Google

sermons was preached there by Popish divines, to the great discomposure of zealous churchmen.*

A more serious innovation followed. Passion week came; and the King determined to hear mass with the same pomp with which his predecessors had been surrounded when they repaired to the temples of the established religion. He announced his intention to the three members of the interior cabinet, and requested them to attend him. Sunderland, to whom all religions were the same, readily consented. Godolphin, as Chamberlain of the Queen, had already been in the habit of giving her his hand when she repaired to her oratory, and felt no scruple about bowing himself officially in the house of Rimmon. But Rochester was greatly disturbed. His influence in the country arose chiefly from the opinion entertained by the clergy and by the Tory gentry, that he was a zealous and uncompromising friend of the Church. His orthodoxy had been considered as fully atoning for faults which would otherwise have made him the most unpopular man in the kingdom, for boundless arrogance, for extreme violence of temper, and for manners almost brutal.† He feared that, by complying with the royal wishes, he should greatly lower himself in the estimation of his party. After some altercation he obtained permission to pass the holidays out of town. All the other great civil dignitaries were ordered to be at their posts on Easter Sunday. The rites of the Church of Rome were once more, after an interval of a hundred and twenty seven years, performed at Westminster with regal splendour. The Guards were drawn out. The Knights of the Garter wore their collars. The Duke of Somerset, second in rank among the temporal nobles of the

* Life of James the Second, ii. 5.; Barillon, $\frac{\text{Feb. 19.}}{\text{Mar. 1.}}$ 1685; Evelyn's Diary, March 5. 168$\frac{4}{5}$.

† "To those that ask boons
He swears by God's oons,
And chides them as if they came there to steal spoons."
Lamentable Lory, a ballad, 1684.

Digitized by Google

realm, carried the sword of state. A long train of great lords accompanied the King to his seat. But it was remarked that Ormond and Halifax remained in the antechamber. A few years before they had gallantly defended the cause of James against some of those who now pressed past them. Ormond had borne no share in the slaughter of Roman Catholics. Halifax had courageously pronounced Stafford not guilty. As the timeservers who had pretended to shudder at the thought of a Popish king, and who had shed without pity the innocent blood of a Popish peer, now elbowed each other to get near a Popish altar, the accomplished Trimmer might, with some justice, indulge his solitary pride in that unpopular nickname.*

His coronation.

Within a week after this ceremony James made a far greater sacrifice of his own religious prejudices than he had yet called on any of his Protestant subjects to make. He was crowned on the twenty-third of April, the feast of the patron saint of the realm. The Abbey and the Hall were splendidly decorated. The presence of the Queen and of the peeresses gave to the solemnity a charm which had been wanting to the magnificent inauguration of the late King. Yet those who remembered that inauguration pronounced that there was a great falling off. The ancient usage was that, before a coronation, the sovereign, with all his heralds, judges, councillors, lords, and great dignitaries, should ride in state from the Tower to Westminster. Of these cavalcades the last and the most glorious was that which passed through the capital while the feelings excited by the Restoration were still in full vigour. Arches of triumph overhung the road. All Cornhill, Cheapside, Saint Paul's Church Yard, Fleet Street, and the Strand, were lined with scaffolding. The

* Barillon, April $\frac{13}{23}$. 1685.

Digitized by Google

whole city had thus been admitted to gaze on royalty in the most splendid and solemn form that royalty could wear. James ordered an estimate to be made of the cost of such a procession, and found that it would amount to about half as much as he proposed to expend in covering his wife with trinkets. He accordingly determined to be profuse where he ought to have been frugal, and niggardly where he might pardonably have been profuse. More than a hundred thousand pounds were laid out in dressing the Queen, and the procession from the Tower was omitted. The folly of this course is obvious. If pageantry be of any use in politics, it is of use as a means of striking the imagination of the multitude. It is surely the height of absurdity to shut out the populace from a show of which the main object is to make an impression on the populace. James would have shown a more judicious munificence and a more judicious parsimony, if he had traversed London from east to west with the accustomed pomp, and had ordered the robes of his wife to be somewhat less thickly set with pearls and diamonds. His example was, however, long followed by his successors; and sums, which, well employed, would have afforded exquisite gratification to a large part of the nation, were squandered on an exhibition to which only three or four thousand privileged persons were admitted. At length the old practice was partially revived. On the day of the coronation of Queen Victoria there was a procession in which many deficiencies might be noted, but which was seen with interest and delight by half a million of her subjects, and which undoubtedly gave far greater pleasure, and called forth far greater enthusiasm, than the more costly display which was witnessed by a select circle within the Abbey.

James had ordered Sancroft to abridge the ritual. The reason publicly assigned was that the day was too short for all that was to be done. But whoever ex-

Digitized by Google

amines the changes which were made will see that the real object was to remove some things highly offensive to the religious feelings of a zealous Roman Catholic. The Communion Service was not read. The ceremony of presenting the sovereign with a richly bound copy of the English Bible, and of exhorting him to prize above all earthly treasures a volume which he had been taught to regard as adulterated with false doctrine, was omitted. What remained, however, after all this curtailment, might well have raised scruples in the mind of a man who sincerely believed the Church of England to be a heretical society, within the pale of which salvation was not to be found. The King made an oblation on the altar. He appeared to join in the petitions of the Litany which was chaunted by the Bishops. He received from those false prophets the unction typical of a divine influence, and knelt with the semblance of devotion while they called down upon him that Holy Spirit of which they were, in his estimation, the malignant and obdurate foes. Such are the inconsistencies of human nature that this man, who, from a fanatical zeal for his religion, threw away three kingdoms, yet chose to commit what was little short of an act of apostasy, rather than forego the childish pleasure of being invested with the gewgaws symbolical of kingly power.*

Francis Turner, Bishop of Ely, preached. He was one of those writers who still affected the obsolete style of Archbishop Williams and Bishop Andrews. The sermon was made up of quaint conceits, such as seventy years earlier might have been admired, but such as moved the scorn of a generation accustomed to the purer eloquence of Sprat, of South, and of

* From Adda's despatch of $\frac{\text{Jan. 22.}}{\text{Feb. 1.}}$ 1686, and from the expressions of the Père d'Orléans (Histoire des Révolutions d'Angleterre, liv. xi.), it is clear that rigid Catholics thought the King's conduct indefensible.

Digitized by Google

Tillotson. King Solomon was King James. Adonijah was Monmouth. Joab was a Rye House conspirator; Shimei, a Whig libeller; Abiathar, an honest but misguided old Cavalier. One phrase in the Book of Chronicles was construed to mean that the King was above the Parliament; and another was cited to prove that he alone ought to command the militia. Towards the close of the discourse the orator very timidly alluded to the new and embarrassing position in which the Church stood with reference to the sovereign, and reminded his hearers that the Emperor Constantius Chlorus, though not himself a Christian, had held in honour those Christians who remained true to their religion, and had treated with scorn those who sought to earn his favour by apostasy. The service in the Abbey was followed by a stately banquet in the Hall, the banquet by brilliant fireworks, and the fireworks by much bad poetry.*

Enthusiasm of the Tories. Addresses.

This may be fixed upon as the moment at which the enthusiasm of the Tory party reached the zenith. Ever since the accession of the new King, addresses had been pouring in which expressed profound veneration for his person and office, and bitter detestation of the vanquished Whigs. The magistrates of Middlesex thanked God for having confounded the designs of those regicides and exclusionists who, not content with having murdered one blessed monarch, were bent on destroying

* London Gazette; Gazette de France; Life of James the Second, ii. 10.; History of the Coronation of King James the Second and Queen Mary, by Francis Sandford, Lancaster Herald, fol. 1687; Evelyn's Diary, May 21. 1685; Despatch of the Dutch Ambassadors, April $\frac{18}{28}$. 1685; Burnet, i. 628.; Eachard, iii. 734.; A sermon preached before their Majesties King James the Second and Queen Mary at their Coronation in Westminster Abbey, April 23. 1685, by Francis, Lord Bishop of Ely, and Lord Almoner. I have seen an Italian account of the Coronation, which was published at Modena, and which is chiefly remarkable for the skill with which the writer sinks the fact that the prayers and psalms were in English, and that the Bishops were heretics.

Digitized by Google

the foundations of monarchy. The city of Gloucester execrated the bloodthirsty villains who had tried to deprive His Majesty of his just inheritance. The burgesses of Wigan assured their sovereign that they would defend him against all plotting Achitophels and rebellious Absaloms. The grand jury of Suffolk expressed a hope that the Parliament would proscribe all the exclusionists. Many corporations pledged themselves never to return to the House of Commons any person who had voted for taking away the birthright of James. Even the capital was profoundly obsequious. The lawyers and the traders vied with each other in servility. Inns of Court and Inns of Chancery sent up fervent professions of attachment and submission. All the great commercial societies, the East India Company, the African Company, the Turkey Company, the Muscovy Company, the Hudson's Bay Company, the Maryland Merchants, the Jamaica Merchants, the Merchant Adventurers, declared that they most cheerfully complied with the royal edict which required them still to pay custom. Bristol, the second city of the island, echoed the voice of London. But nowhere was the spirit of loyalty stronger than in the two Universities. Oxford declared that she would never swerve from those religious principles which bound her to obey the King without any restrictions or limitations. Cambridge condemned, in severe terms, the violence and treachery of those turbulent men who had maliciously endeavoured to turn the stream of succession out of the ancient channel.*

The elections.

Such addresses as these filled, during a considerable time, every number of the London Gazette. But it was not only by addressing that the Tories showed their zeal. The writs for the new Parliament had gone forth, and the country

* See the London Gazette during the months of February, March, and April, 1685.

Digitized by Google

was agitated by the tumult of a general election. No election had ever taken place under circumstances so favourable to the Court. Hundreds of thousands whom the Popish plot had scared into Whiggism had been scared back by the Rye House plot into Toryism. In the counties the government could depend on an overwhelming majority of the gentlemen of three hundred a year and upwards, and on the clergy almost to a man. Those boroughs which had once been the citadels of Whiggism had recently been deprived of their charters by legal sentence, or had prevented the sentence by voluntary surrender. They had now been reconstituted in such a manner that they were certain to return members devoted to the crown. Where the townsmen could not be trusted, the freedom had been bestowed on the neighbouring squires. In some of the small western corporations, the constituent bodies were in great part composed of Captains and Lieutenants of the Guards. The returning officers were almost everywhere in the interest of the court. In every shire the Lord Lieutenant and his deputies formed a powerful, active, and vigilant committee, for the purpose of cajoling and intimidating the freeholders. The people were solemnly warned from thousands of pulpits not to vote for any Whig candidate, as they should answer it to Him who had ordained the powers that be, and who had pronounced rebellion a sin not less deadly than witchcraft. All these advantages the predominant party not only used to the utmost, but abused in so shameless a manner that grave and reflecting men, who had been true to the monarchy in peril, and who bore no love to republicans and schismatics, stood aghast, and augured from such beginnings the approach of evil times.*

* It would be easy to fill a volume with what Whig historians and pamphleteers have written on this subject. I will cite only one witness, a churchman and a Tory. "Elections," says Evelyn,

Digitized by Google

Yet the Whigs, though suffering the just punishment of their errors, though defeated, disheartened, and disorganised, did not yield without an effort. They were still numerous among the traders and artisans of the towns, and among the yeomanry and peasantry of the open country. In some districts, in Dorsetshire for example, and in Somersetshire, they were the great majority of the population. In the remodelled boroughs they could do nothing: but, in every county where they had a chance, they struggled desperately. In Bedfordshire, which had lately been represented by the virtuous and unfortunate Russell, they were victorious on the show of hands, but were beaten at the poll.* In Essex they polled thirteen hundred votes to eighteen hundred.† At the election for Northamptonshire the common people were so violent in their hostility to the court candidate that a body of troops was drawn out in the marketplace of the county town, and was ordered to load with ball.‡ The history of the contest for Buckinghamshire is still more remarkable. The Whig candidate, Thomas Wharton, eldest son of Philip Lord Wharton, was a man distinguished alike by dexterity and by audacity, and destined to play a conspicuous, though not always a respectable, part in the politics of several reigns. He had been one of those members of the House of Commons who had carried up the Exclusion Bill to the bar of the Lords. The court was therefore bent on throwing him out by

"were thought to be very indecently carried on in most places. God give a better issue of it than some expect!" May 10. 1685. Again he says, "The truth is there were many of the new members whose elections and returns were universally condemned." May 22.

* This fact I learned from a newsletter in the library of the Royal Institution. Van Citters mentions the strength of the Whig party in Bedfordshire.

† Bramston's Memoirs.

‡ Reflections on a Remonstrance and Protestation of all the good Protestants of this Kingdom, 1689; Dialogue between Two Friends, 1689.

Digitized by Google

fair or foul means. The Lord Chief Justice Jeffreys himself came down into Buckinghamshire, for the purpose of assisting a gentleman named Hacket, who stood on the high Tory interest. A stratagem was devised which, it was thought, could not fail of success. It was given out that the polling would take place at Ailesbury; and Wharton, whose skill in all the arts of electioneering was unrivalled, made his arrangements on that supposition. At a moment's warning the Sheriff adjourned the poll to Newport Pagnell. Wharton and his friends hurried thither, and found that Hacket, who was in the secret, had already secured every inn and lodging. The Whig freeholders were compelled to tie their horses to the hedges, and to sleep under the open sky in the meadows which surround the little town. It was with the greatest difficulty that refreshments could be procured at such short notice for so large a number of men and beasts, though Wharton, who was utterly regardless of money when his ambition and party spirit were roused, disbursed fifteen hundred pounds in one day, an immense outlay for those times. Injustice seems, however, to have animated the courage of the stouthearted yeomen of Bucks, the sons of the constituents of John Hampden. Not only was Wharton at the head of the poll; but he was able to spare his second votes to a man of moderate opinions, and to throw out the Chief Justice's candidate.*

In Cheshire the contest lasted six days. The Whigs polled about seventeen hundred votes, the Tories about two thousand. The common people were vehement on the Whig side, raised the cry of "Down with the Bishops," insulted the clergy in the streets of Chester, knocked down one gentleman of the Tory party, broke the windows and beat the constables. The militia was called out to quell the riot, and was kept assem-

* Memoirs of the Life of Thomas Marquess of Wharton, 1715.

Digitized by Google

bled, in order to protect the festivities of the conquerors. When the poll closed, a salute of five great guns from the castle, proclaimed the triumph of the Church and the Crown to the surrounding country. The bells rang. The newly elected members went in state to the City Cross, accompanied by a band of music, and by a long train of knights and squires. The procession, as it marched, sang "Joy to Great Cæsar," a loyal ode, which had lately been written by Durfey, and which, though, like all Durfey's writings, utterly contemptible, was, at that time, almost as popular as Lillibullero became a few years later.* Round the Cross the trainbands were drawn up in order: a bonfire was lighted: the Exclusion Bill was burned: and the health of King James was drunk with loud acclamations. The following day was Sunday. In the morning the militia lined the streets leading to the Cathedral. The two knights of the shire were escorted with great pomp to their choir by the magistracy of the city, heard the Dean preach a sermon, probably on the duty of passive obedience, and were afterwards feasted by the Mayor.†

In Northumberland the triumph of Sir John Fenwick, a courtier whose name afterwards obtained a melancholy celebrity, was attended by circumstances which excited interest in London, and which were thought not unworthy of being mentioned in the despatches of foreign ministers. Newcastle was lighted up with great piles of coal. The steeples sent forth a joyous peal. A copy of the Exclusion Bill, and a black box, resembling that which, according to the popular fable, contained the contract between Charles

* See the Guardian, No. 67.; an exquisite specimen of Addison's peculiar manner. It would be difficult to find in the works of any other writer such an instance of benevolence delicately flavoured with contempt.

† The Observator, April 4. 1685.

Digitized by Google

the Second and Lucy Walters, were publicly committed to the flames, with loud acclamations.*

The general result of the elections exceeded the most sanguine expectations of the court. James found with delight that it would be unnecessary for him to expend a farthing in buying votes. He said that, with the exception of about forty members, the House of Commons was just such as he should himself have named.† And this House of Commons it was in his power, as the law then stood, to keep to the end of his reign.

Secure of parliamentary support, he might now indulge in the luxury of revenge. His nature was not placable; and, while still a subject, he had suffered some injuries and indignities which might move even a placable nature to fierce and lasting resentment. One set of men in particular had, with a baseness and cruelty beyond all example and all description, attacked his honour and his life, the witnesses of the plot. He may well be excused for hating them; since, even at this day, the mention of their names excites the disgust and horror of all sects and parties.

Some of these wretches were already beyond the reach of human justice. Bedloe had died in his wickedness, without one sign of remorse or shame.‡ Dugdale had followed, driven mad, men said, by the Furies of an evil conscience, and with loud shrieks imploring those who stood round his bed to take away Lord Stafford.§ Carstairs, too, was gone. His end had been all horror and despair; and, with his last breath, he had told his attendants to throw him into a ditch like a dog, for that he was not fit to sleep in

* Despatch of the Dutch Ambassadors, April $\frac{18}{28}$. 1685.

† Burnet, i. 626.

‡ A faithful account of the Sickness, Death, and Burial of Captain Bedlow, 1680; Narrative of Lord Chief Justice North.

§ Smith's Intrigues of the Popish Plot, 1685.

Digitized by Google

a Christian burial ground.* But Oates and Dangerfield were still within the reach of the stern prince whom they had wronged. James, a short time before his accession, had instituted a civil suit against Oates for defamatory words; and a jury had given damages to the enormous amount of a hundred thousand pounds.† The defendant had been taken in execution, and was lying in prison as a debtor, without hope of release. Two bills of indictment against him for perjury had been found by the grand jury of Middlesex, a few weeks before the death of Charles. Soon after the close of the elections the trial came on.

Proceedings against Oates.

Among the upper and middle classes Oates had few friends left. The most respectable Whigs were now convinced that, even if his narrative had some foundation in fact, he had erected on that foundation a vast superstructure of romance. A considerable number of low fanatics, however, still regarded him as a public benefactor. These people well knew that, if he were convicted, his sentence would be one of extreme severity, and were therefore indefatigable in their endeavours to manage an escape. Though he was as yet in confinement only for debt, he was put into irons by the authorities of the King's Bench prison; and even so he was with difficulty kept in safe custody. The mastiff that guarded his door was poisoned; and, on the very night preceding the trial, a ladder of ropes was introduced into the cell.

On the day in which Titus was brought to the bar, Westminster Hall was crowded with spectators, among whom were many Roman Catholics, eager to see the misery and humiliation of their persecutor.‡

* Burnet, i. 439.

† See the proceedings in the Collection of State Trials.

‡ Evelyn's Diary, May 7 1685.

Digitized by Google

A few years earlier his short neck, his legs uneven, the vulgar said, as those of a badger, his forehead low as that of a baboon, his purple cheeks, and his monstrous length of chin, had been familiar to all who frequented the courts of law. He had then been the idol of the nation. Wherever he had appeared, men had uncovered their heads to him. The lives and estates of the magnates of the realm had been at his mercy. Times had now changed, and many, who had formerly regarded him as the deliverer of his country, shuddered at the sight of those hideous features on which villany seemed to be written by the hand of God.*

It was proved, beyond all possibility of doubt, that this man had, by false testimony, deliberately murdered several guiltless persons. He called in vain on the most eminent members of the Parliaments which had rewarded and extolled him to give evidence in his favour. Some of those whom he had summoned absented themselves. None of them said anything tending to his vindication. One of them, the Earl of Huntingdon, bitterly reproached him with having deceived the Houses and drawn on them the guilt of shedding innocent blood. The Judges browbeat and reviled the prisoner with an intemperance which, even in the most atrocious cases, ill becomes the judicial character. He betrayed, however, no sign of fear or of shame, and faced the storm of invective which burst upon him from bar, bench, and witness box, with the insolence of despair. He was convicted on both indictments. His offence, though, in a moral light, murder of the most aggravated kind, was, in the eye of the law, merely a misdemeanour. The tribunal, however, was desirous to make his punish-

* There remain many pictures of Oates. The most striking descriptions of his person are in North's Examen, 225., in Dryden's Absalom and Achitophel, and in a broadside entitled, A Hue and Cry after T. O.

Digitized by Google

ment more severe than that of felons or traitors, and not merely to put him to death, but to put him to death by frightful torments. He was sentenced to be stripped of his clerical habit, to be pilloried in Palace Yard, to be led round Westminster Hall with an inscription declaring his infamy over his head, to be pilloried again in front of the Royal Exchange, to be whipped from Aldgate to Newgate, and, after an interval of two days, to be whipped from Newgate to Tyburn. If, against all probability, he should happen to survive this horrible infliction, he was to be kept close prisoner during life. Five times every year he was to be brought forth from his dungeon and exposed on the pillory in different parts of the capital.* This rigorous sentence was rigorously executed. On the day on which Oates was pilloried in Palace Yard, he was mercilessly pelted and ran some risk of being pulled in pieces.† But in the City his partisans mustered in great force, raised a riot, and upset the pillory.‡ They were, however, unable to rescue their favourite. It was supposed that he would try to escape the horrible doom which awaited him by swallowing poison. All that he ate and drank was therefore carefully inspected. On the following morning he was brought forth to undergo his first flogging. At an early hour an innumerable multitude filled all the streets from Aldgate to the Old Bailey. The hangman laid on the lash with such unusual severity as showed that he had received special instructions. The blood ran down in rivulets. For a time the criminal showed a strange constancy: but at last his stubborn fortitude gave way. His bellowings were frightful to hear. He swooned several times; but the

* The proceedings will be found at length in the Collection of State Trials.

† Gazette de France, $\frac{\text{May } 29.}{\text{June } 9.}$ 1685.

‡ Despatch of the Dutch Ambassadors, May $\frac{29}{\text{June } 8}$. 1685.

Digitized by Google

scourge still continued to descend. When he was unbound, it seemed that he had borne as much as the human frame can bear without dissolution. James was entreated to remit the second flogging. His answer was short and clear: "He shall go through with it, if he has breath in his body." An attempt was made to obtain the Queen's intercession; but she indignantly refused to say a word in favour of such a wretch. After an interval of only forty eight hours, Oates was again brought out of his dungeon. He was unable to stand, and it was necessary to drag him to Tyburn on a sledge. He seemed quite insensible; and the Tories reported that he had stupified himself with strong drink. A person who counted the stripes on the second day said that they were seventeen hundred. The bad man escaped with life, but so narrowly that his ignorant and bigoted admirers thought his recovery miraculous, and appealed to it as a proof of his innocence. The doors of the prison closed upon him. During many months he remained ironed in the darkest hole of Newgate. It was said that in his cell he gave himself up to melancholy, and sate whole days uttering deep groans, his arms folded, and his hat pulled over his eyes. It was not in England alone that these events excited strong interest. Millions of Roman Catholics, who knew nothing of our institutions or of our factions, had heard that a persecution of singular barbarity had raged in our island against the professors of the true faith, that many pious men had suffered martyrdom, and that Titus Oates had been the chief murderer. There was, therefore, great joy in distant countries when it was known that the divine justice had overtaken him. Engravings of him, looking out from the pillory, and writhing at the cart's tail, were circulated all over Europe; and epigrammatists, in many languages, made merry with the doctoral title which he pretended to have received from the Univer-

Digitized by Google

sity of Salamanca, and remarked that, since his forehead could not be made to blush, it was but reasonable that his back should do so.*

Horrible as were the sufferings of Oates, they did not equal his crimes. The old law of England, which had been suffered to become obsolete, treated the false witness, who had caused death by means of perjury, as a murderer.† This was wise and righteous; for such a witness is, in truth, the worst of murderers. To the guilt of shedding innocent blood he has added the guilt of violating the most solemn engagement into which man can enter with his fellow men, and of making institutions, to which it is desirable that the public should look with respect and confidence, instruments of frightful wrong and objects of general distrust. The pain produced by ordinary murder bears no proportion to the pain produced by murder of which the courts of justice are made the agents. The mere extinction of life is a very small part of what makes an execution horrible. The prolonged mental agony of the sufferer, the shame and misery of all connected with him, the

* Evelyn's Diary, May 22. 1685; Eachard, iii. 741.; Burnet, i. 637.; Observator, May 27. 1685; Oates's Εἰκών, 89.; Εἰκὼν βροτολοιγοῦ, 1697; Commons' Journals of May, June, and July, 1689; Tom Brown's Advice to Dr. Oates. Some interesting circumstances are mentioned in a broadside, printed for A. Brooks, Charing Cross, 1685. I have seen contemporary French and Italian pamphlets containing the history of the trial and execution. A print of Titus in the pillory was published at Milan, with the following curious inscription: "Questo è il naturale ritratto di Tito Otez, o vero Oatz, Inglese, posto in berlina, uno de' principali professori della religion protestante, acerrimo persecutore de' Cattolici, e gran spergiuro." I have also seen a Dutch engraving of his punishment, with some Latin verses, of which the following are a specimen:

"At Doctor fictus non fictos pertulit ictus,
A tortore datos haud molli in corpore gratos,
Disceret ut vere scelera ob commissa rubere."

The anagram of his name, "Testis Ovat," may be found on many prints published in different countries.

† Blackstone's Commentaries, Chapter of Homicide.

Digitized by Google

stain abiding even to the third and fourth generation, are things far more dreadful than death itself. In general it may be safely affirmed that the father of a large family would rather be bereaved of all his children by accident or by disease than lose one of them by the hands of the hangman. Murder by false testimony is therefore the most aggravated species of murder; and Oates had been guilty of many such murders. Nevertheless the punishment which was inflicted upon him cannot be justified. In sentencing him to be stripped of his ecclesiastical habit and imprisoned for life, the judges exceeded their legal power. They were undoubtedly competent to inflict whipping; nor had the law assigned a limit to the number of stripes. But the spirit of the law clearly was that no misdemeanour should be punished more severely than the most atrocious felonies. The worst felon could only be hanged. The judges, as they believed, sentenced Oates to be scourged to death. That the law was defective is not a sufficient excuse: for defective laws should be altered by the legislature, and not strained by the tribunals; and least of all should the law be strained for the purpose of inflicting torture and destroying life. That Oates was a bad man is not a sufficient excuse; for the guilty are almost always the first to suffer those hardships which are afterwards used as precedents against the innocent. Thus it was in the present case. Merciless flogging soon became an ordinary punishment for political misdemeanours of no very aggravated kind. Men were sentenced, for words spoken against the government, to pain so excruciating that they, with unfeigned earnestness, begged to be brought to trial on capital charges, and sent to the gallows. Happily the progress of this great evil was speedily stopped by the Revolution, and by that article of the Bill of Rights which condemns all cruel and unusual punishments.

Digitized by Google

The villany of Dangerfield had not, like that of Oates, destroyed many innocent victims; for Dangerfield had not taken up the trade of a witness till the plot had been blown upon and till juries had become incredulous.* He was brought to trial, not for perjury, but for the less heinous offence of libel. He had, during the agitation caused by the Exclusion Bill, put forth a narrative containing some false and odious imputations on the late and on the present King. For this publication he was now, after the lapse of five years, suddenly taken up, brought before the Privy Council, committed, tried, convicted, and sentenced to be whipped from Aldgate to Newgate and from Newgate to Tyburn. The wretched man behaved with great effrontery during the trial; but, when he heard his doom, he went into agonies of despair, gave himself up for dead, and chose a text for his funeral sermon. His forebodings were just. He was not, indeed, scourged quite so severely as Oates had been; but he had not Oates's iron strength of body and mind. After the execution Dangerfield was put into a hackney coach and was taken back to prison. As he passed the corner of Hatton Garden, a Tory gentleman of Gray's Inn, named Francis, stopped the carriage, and cried out with brutal levity, "Well, friend, have you had your heat this morning?" The bleeding prisoner, maddened by this insult, answered with a curse. Francis instantly struck him in the face with a cane which injured the eye. Dangerfield was carried dying into

Proceedings against Dangerfield.

* According to Roger North the judges decided that Dangerfield, having been previously convicted of perjury, was incompetent to be a witness of the plot. But this is one among many instances of Roger's inaccuracy. It appears, from the report of the trial of Lord Castlemaine in June 1680, that, after much altercation between counsel, and much consultation among the judges of the different courts in Westminster Hall, Dangerfield was sworn and suffered to tell his story: but the jury very properly gave no credit to his testimony.

Digitized by Google

Newgate. This dastardly outrage roused the indignation of the bystanders. They seized Francis, and were with difficulty restrained from tearing him to pieces. The appearance of Dangerfield's body, which had been frightfully lacerated by the whip, inclined many to believe that his death was chiefly, if not wholly, caused by the stripes which he had received. The government and the Chief Justice thought it convenient to lay the whole blame on Francis, who, though he seems to have been at worst guilty only of aggravated manslaughter, was tried and executed for murder. His dying speech is one of the most curious monuments of that age. The savage spirit which had brought him to the gallows remained with him to the last. Boasts of his loyalty and abuse of the Whigs were mingled with the parting ejaculations in which he commended his soul to the divine mercy. An idle rumour had been circulated that his wife was in love with Dangerfield, who was eminently handsome and renowned for gallantry. The fatal blow, it was said, had been prompted by jealousy. The dying husband, with an earnestness, half ridiculous, half pathetic, vindicated the lady's character. She was, he said, a virtuous woman: she came of a loyal stock, and, if she had been inclined to break her marriage vow, would at least have selected a Tory and a churchman for her paramour.*

* Dangerfield's trial was not reported; but I have seen a concise account of it in a contemporary broadside. An abstract of the evidence against Francis, and his dying speech, will be found in the Collection of State Trials. See Eachard, iii. 741 Burnet's narrative contains more mistakes than lines. See also North's Examen, 256., the sketch of Dangerfield's life in the Bloody Assizes, the Observator of July 29. 1685, and the poem entitled "Dangerfield's Ghost to Jeffreys." In the very rare volume entitled "Succinct Genealogies, by Robert Halstead," Lord Peterborough says that Dangerfield, with whom he had had some intercourse, was "a young man who appeared under a decent figure, a serious behaviour, and with words that did not seem to proceed from a common understanding."

Digitized by Google

About the same time a culprit, who bore very little resemblance to Oates or Dangerfield, appeared on the floor of the Court of King's Bench. No eminent chief of a party has ever passed through many years of civil and religious dissension with more innocence than Richard Baxter. He belonged to the mildest and most temperate section of the Puritan body. He was a young man when the civil war broke out. He thought that the right was on the side of the Houses; and he had no scruple about acting as chaplain to a regiment in the parliamentary army: but his clear and somewhat sceptical understanding, and his strong sense of justice, preserved him from all excesses. He exerted himself to check the fanatical violence of the soldiery. He condemned the proceedings of the High Court of Justice. In the days of the Commonwealth he had the boldness to express, on many occasions, and once even in Cromwell's presence, love and reverence for the ancient institutions of the country. While the royal family was in exile, Baxter's life was chiefly passed at Kidderminster in the assiduous discharge of parochial duties. He heartily concurred in the Restoration, and was sincerely desirous to bring about an union between Episcopalians and Presbyterians. For, with a liberality rare in his time, he considered questions of ecclesiastical polity as of small account when compared with the great principles of Christianity, and had never, even when prelacy was most odious to the ruling powers, joined in the outcry against Bishops. The attempt to reconcile the contending factions failed. Baxter cast in his lot with his proscribed friends, refused the mitre of Hereford, quitted the parsonage of Kidderminster, and gave himself up almost wholly to study. His theological writings, though too moderate to be pleasing to the bigots of any party, had an immense reputation. Zealous Churchmen called him a Roundhead; and

Proceedings against Baxter.

Digitized by Google

many Nonconformists accused him of Erastianism and Arminianism. But the integrity of his heart, the purity of his life, the vigour of his faculties, and the extent of his attainments were acknowledged by the best and wisest men of every persuasion. His political opinions, in spite of the oppression which he and his brethren had suffered, were moderate. He was friendly to that small party which was hated by both Whigs and Tories. He could not, he said, join in cursing the Trimmers, when he remembered who it was that had blessed the peacemakers.*

In a Commentary on the New Testament he had complained, with some bitterness, of the persecution which the Dissenters suffered. That men who, for not using the Prayer Book, had been driven from their homes, stripped of their property, and locked up in dungeons, should dare to utter a murmur, was then thought a high crime against the State and the Church. Roger Lestrange, the champion of the government and the oracle of the clergy, sounded the note of war in the Observator. An information was filed. Baxter begged that he might be allowed some time to prepare for his defence. It was on the day on which Oates was pilloried in Palace Yard that the illustrious chief of the Puritans, oppressed by age and infirmities, came to Westminster Hall to make this request. Jeffreys burst into a storm of rage. "Not a minute," he cried, "to save his life. I can deal with saints as well as with sinners. There stands Oates on one side of the pillory; and, if Baxter stood on the other, the two greatest rogues in the kingdom would stand together."

When the trial came on at Guildhall, a crowd of those who loved and honoured Baxter filled the court. At his side stood Doctor William Bates, one of the

* Baxter's preface to Sir Matthew Hale's Judgment of the Nature of True Religion, 1684.

Digitized by Google

most eminent of the Nonconformist divines. Two Whig barristers of great note, Pollexfen and Wallop, appeared for the defendant. Pollexfen had scarcely begun his address to the jury, when the Chief Justice broke forth: "Pollexfen, I know you well. I will set a mark on you. You are the patron of the faction. This is an old rogue, a schismatical knave, a hypocritical villain. He hates the Liturgy. He would have nothing but longwinded cant without book:" and then his Lordship turned up his eyes, clasped his hands, and began to sing through his nose, in imitation of what he supposed to be Baxter's style of praying, "Lord, we are thy people, thy peculiar people, thy dear people." Pollexfen gently reminded the court that his late Majesty had thought Baxter deserving of a bishopric. "And what ailed the old blockhead then," cried Jeffreys, "that he did not take it?" His fury now rose almost to madness. He called Baxter a dog, and swore that it would be no more than justice to whip such a villain through the whole City.

Wallop interposed, but fared no better than his leader. "You are in all these dirty causes, Mr. Wallop," said the Judge. "Gentlemen of the long robe ought to be ashamed to assist such factious knaves." The advocate made another attempt to obtain a hearing, but to no purpose. "If you do not know your duty," said Jeffreys, "I will teach it you."

Wallop sate down; and Baxter himself attempted to put in a word. But the Chief Justice drowned all expostulation in a torrent of ribaldry and invective, mingled with scraps of Hudibras. "My Lord," said the old man, "I have been much blamed by Dissenters for speaking respectfully of Bishops." "Baxter for Bishops!" cried the Judge, "that's a merry conceit indeed. I know what you mean by Bishops,

Digitized by Google

rascals like yourself, Kidderminster Bishops, factious snivelling Presbyterians!" Again Baxter essayed to speak, and again Jeffreys bellowed, "Richard, Richard, dost thou think we will let thee poison the court? Richard, thou art an old knave. Thou hast written books enough to load a cart, and every book as full of sedition as an egg is full of meat. By the grace of God, I'll look after thee. I see a great many of your brotherhood waiting to know what will befall their mighty Don. And there," he continued, fixing his savage eye on Bates, "there is a Doctor of the party at your elbow. But, by the grace of God Almighty, I will crush you all."

Baxter held his peace. But one of the junior counsel for the defence made a last effort, and undertook to show that the words of which complaint was made would not bear the construction put on them by the information. With this view he began to read the context. In a moment he was roared down. "You sha'n't turn the court into a conventicle." The noise of weeping was heard from some of those who surrounded Baxter. "Snivelling calves!" said the Judge.

Witnesses to character were in attendance, and among them were several clergymen of the Established Church. But the Chief Justice would hear nothing. "Does your Lordship think," said Baxter, "that any jury will convict a man on such a trial as this?" "I warrant you, Mr. Baxter," said Jeffreys: "don't trouble yourself about that." Jeffreys was right. The Sheriffs were the tools of the government. The jurymen, selected by the Sheriffs from among the fiercest zealots of the Tory party, conferred for a moment, and returned a verdict of Guilty. "My Lord," said Baxter, as he left the court, "there was once a Chief Justice who would have treated me very differently." He alluded to his learned and virtuous friend Sir Matthew Hale. "There is not an honest

Digitized by Google

man in England," answered Jeffreys, "but looks on thee as a knave." *

The sentence was, for those times, a lenient one. What passed in conference among the judges cannot be certainly known. It was believed among the Nonconformists, and is highly probable, that the Chief Justice was overruled by his three brethren. He proposed, it is said, that Baxter should be whipped through London at the cart's tail. The majority thought that an eminent divine, who, a quarter of a century before, had been offered a mitre, and who was now in his seventieth year, would be sufficiently punished for a few sharp words by fine and imprisonment.†

Meeting of the Parliament of Scotland.

The manner in which Baxter was treated by a judge, who was a member of the cabinet and a favourite of the Sovereign, indicated, in a manner not to be mistaken, the feeling with which the government at this time regarded the Protestant Nonconformists. But already that feeling had been indicated by still stronger and more terrible signs. The Parliament of Scotland had met. James had purposely hastened the session of this body, and had postponed the session of the English Houses, in the hope that the example set at Edinburgh would produce a good effect at Westminster. For the legislature of his northern kingdom was as obsequious as those provincial Estates which Lewis the Fourteenth still suffered to play at some of their ancient functions in Britanny and Burgundy. None but an Episcopalian could sit in the Scottish Parliament, or could even vote for a

* See the Observator of February 25. 1685, the information in the Collection of State Trials, the account of what passed in court given by Calamy, Life of Baxter, chap. xiv., and the very curious extracts from the Baxter MSS. in the Life, by Orme, published in 1830.

† Baxter MS. cited by Orme.

Digitized by Google

member, and in Scotland an Episcopalian was always a Tory or a timeserver. From an assembly thus constituted little opposition to the royal wishes was to be apprehended; and even the assembly thus constituted could pass no law which had not been previously approved by a committee of courtiers.

All that the government asked was readily granted. In a financial point of view, indeed, the liberality of the Scottish Estates was of little consequence. They gave, however, what their scanty means permitted. They annexed in perpetuity to the crown the duties which had been granted to the late King, and which in his time had been estimated at forty thousand pounds sterling a year. They also settled on James for life an additional annual income of two hundred and sixteen thousand pounds Scots, equivalent to eighteen thousand pounds sterling. The whole sum which they were able to bestow was about sixty thousand a year, little more than what was poured into the English Exchequer every fortnight.*

Having little money to give, the Estates supplied the defect by loyal professions and barbarous statutes. The King, in a letter which was read to them at the opening of their session, called on them in vehement language to provide new penal laws against the refractory Presbyterians, and expressed his regret that business made it impossible for him to propose such laws in person from the throne. His commands were obeyed. A statute framed by his ministers was promptly passed, a statute which stands forth, even among the statutes of that unhappy country at that unhappy period, preeminent in atrocity. It was enacted, in few but emphatic words, that whoever should preach in a conventicle under a roof, or should attend, either as preacher

* Act. Parl. Car. II. March 29. 1661; Jac. VII. April 28. 1685, and May 13. 1685.

Digitized by Google

or as hearer, a conventicle in the open air, should be punished with death and confiscation of property.*

This law, passed at the King's instance by an assembly devoted to his will, deserves especial notice. For he has been frequently represented by ignorant writers as a prince rash, indeed, and injudicious in his choice of means, but intent on one of the noblest ends which a ruler can pursue, the establishment of entire religious liberty. Nor can it be denied that some portions of his life, when detached from the rest and superficially considered, seem to warrant this favourable view of his character.

Feeling of James towards the Puritans.

While a subject he had been, during many years, a persecuted man; and persecution had produced its usual effect on him. His mind, dull and narrow as it was, had profited under that sharp discipline. While he was excluded from the Court, from the Admiralty, and from the Council, and was in danger of being also excluded from the throne, only because he could not help believing in transubstantiation and in the authority of the see of Rome, he made such rapid progress in the doctrines of toleration that he left Milton and Locke behind. What, he often said, could be more unjust, than to visit speculations with penalties which ought to be reserved for acts? What more impolitic than to reject the services of good soldiers, seamen, lawyers, diplomatists, financiers, because they hold unsound opinions about the number of the sacraments or the pluripresence of saints? He learned by rote those commonplaces which all sects repeat so fluently when they are enduring oppression, and forget so easily when they are able to retaliate it. Indeed he rehearsed his lesson so well, that those who chanced to hear him on this subject gave him credit for much

* Act. Parl. Jac. VII. May 8. 1685; Observator, June 20. 1685. Lestrange evidently wished to see the precedent followed in England.

Digitized by Google

more sense and much readier elocution than he really possessed. His professions imposed on some charitable persons, and perhaps imposed on himself. But his zeal for the rights of conscience ended with the predominance of the Whig party. When fortune changed, when he was no longer afraid that others would persecute him, when he had it in his power to persecute others, his real propensities began to show themselves. He hated the Puritan sects with a manifold hatred, theological and political, hereditary and personal. He regarded them as the foes of Heaven, as the foes of all legitimate authority in Church and State, as his greatgrandmother's foes and his grandfather's, his father's and his mother's, his brother's and his own. He, who had complained so loudly of the laws against Papists, now declared himself unable to conceive how men could have the impudence to propose the repeal of the laws against Puritans.* He, whose favourite theme had been the injustice of requiring civil functionaries to take religious tests, established in Scotland, when he resided there as Viceroy, the most rigorous religious test that has ever been known in the empire.† He, who had expressed just indignation when the priests of his own faith were hanged and quartered, amused himself with hearing Covenanters shriek and seeing them writhe while their knees were beaten flat in the boots.‡ In this mood he became King; and he immediately demanded and obtained from the obsequious

* His own words reported by himself. Life of James the Second, i. 656. Orig. Mem.

† Act. Parl. Car. II. August 31. 1681.

‡ Burnet, i. 583.; Wodrow, III. v. 2. Unfortunately the Acta of the Scottish Privy Council during almost the whole administration of the Duke of York are wanting. (1848.) This assertion has been met by a direct contradiction. But the fact is exactly as I have stated it. There is in the Acta of the Scottish Privy Council a hiatus extending from August 1678 to August 1682. The Duke of York began to reside in Scotland in December 1679. He left Scotland, never to return, in May 1682. (1857.)

Digitized by Google

Estates of Scotland, as the surest pledge of their loyalty, the most sanguinary law that has ever in our island been enacted against Protestant Nonconformists.

With this law the whole spirit of his administration was in perfect harmony. The fiery persecution, which had raged when he ruled Scotland as vicegerent, waxed hotter than ever from the day on which he became sovereign. Those shires in which the Covenanters were most numerous were given up to the license of the army. With the army was mingled a militia, composed of the most violent and profligate of those who called themselves Episcopalians. Preeminent among the bands which oppressed and wasted these unhappy districts were the dragoons commanded by John Graham of Claverhouse. The story ran that these wicked men used in their revels to play at the torments of hell, and to call each other by the names of devils and damned souls.* The chief of this Tophet, a soldier of distinguished courage and professional skill, but rapacious and profane, of violent temper and of obdurate heart, has left a name which, wherever the Scottish race is settled on the face of the globe, is mentioned with a peculiar energy of hatred. To recapitulate all the crimes, by which this man, and men like him, goaded the peasantry of the Western Lowlands into madness, would be an endless task. A few instances must suffice; and all those instances shall be taken from the history of a single fortnight, that very fortnight in which the Scottish Parliament, at the urgent request of James, enacted a new law of unprecedented severity against Dissenters.

Cruel treatment of the Scotch Covenanters.

John Brown, a poor carrier of Lanarkshire, was, for his singular piety, commonly called the Christian carrier. Many years later, when Scotland enjoyed

* Wodrow, III. ix. 6.

Digitized by Google

rest, prosperity, and religious freedom, old men who remembered the evil days described him as one versed in divine things, blameless in life, and so peaceable that the tyrants could find no offence in him except that he absented himself from the public worship of the Episcopalians. On the first of May he was cutting turf, when he was seized by Claverhouse's dragoons, rapidly examined, convicted of nonconformity, and sentenced to death. It is said that, even among the soldiers, it was not easy to find an executioner. For the wife of the poor man was present: she led one little child by the hand: it was easy to see that she was about to give birth to another; and even those wild and hardhearted men, who nicknamed one another Beelzebub and Apollyon, shrank from the great wickedness of butchering her husband before her face. The prisoner, meanwhile, raised above himself by the near prospect of eternity, prayed loud and fervently as one inspired, till Claverhouse, in a fury, shot him dead. It was reported by credible witnesses that the widow cried out in her agony, "Well, sir, well; the day of reckoning will come;" and that the murderer replied, "To man I can answer for what I have done; and as for God, I will take him into mine own hand." Yet it was rumoured that even on his seared conscience and adamantine heart the dying ejaculations of his victim made an impression which was never effaced.*

On the fifth of May two artisans, Peter Gillies and John Bryce, were tried in Ayrshire by a military tri-

* Wodrow, III. ix. 6. The editor of the Oxford edition of Burnet attempts to excuse this act by alleging that Claverhouse was then employed to intercept all communication between Argyle and Monmouth, and by supposing that John Brown may have been detected in conveying intelligence between the rebel camps. Unfortunately for this hypothesis John Brown was shot on the first of May, when both Argyle and Monmouth were in Holland, and when there was no insurrection in any part of our island.

Digitized by Google

bunal consisting of fifteen soldiers. The indictment is still extant. The prisoners were charged, not with any act of rebellion, but with holding the same pernicious doctrines which had impelled others to rebel, and with wanting only opportunity to act upon those doctrines. The proceeding was summary. In a few hours the two culprits were convicted, hanged, and flung together into a hole under the gallows.*

The eleventh of May was made remarkable by more than one great crime. Some rigid Calvinists had from the doctrine of reprobation drawn the consequence that to pray for any person who had been predestined to perdition was an act of mutiny against the eternal decrees of the Supreme Being. Three poor labouring men, deeply imbued with this unamiable divinity, were stopped by an officer in the neighbourhood of Glasgow. They were asked whether they would pray for King James the Seventh. They refused to do so except under the condition that he was one of the elect. A file of musketeers was drawn out. The prisoners knelt down: they were blindfolded; and, within an hour after they had been arrested, their blood was lapped up by the dogs.†

While this was done in Clydesdale, an act not less

* Wodrow, III. ix. 6.

† Ibid. It has been confidently asserted, by persons who have not taken the trouble to look at the authority to which I have referred, that I have grossly calumniated these unfortunate men; that I do not understand the Calvinistic theology; and that it is impossible that members of the Church of Scotland can have refused to pray for any man, on the ground that he was not one of the elect.

I can only refer to the narrative which Wodrow has inserted in his History, and which he justly calls plain and natural. That narrative is signed by two eyewitnesses, and Wodrow, before he published it, submitted it to a third eyewitness who pronounced it strictly accurate. From that narrative I will extract the only words which bear on the point in question: "When all the three were taken, the officers consulted among themselves, and, withdrawing to the west side of the town, questioned the prisoners, particularly if they would pray for King James VII. They answered, they would pray for all within the election of grace. Balfour said, Do you question the King's election? They answered,

Digitized by Google

horrible was perpetrated in Eskdale. One of the proscribed Covenanters, overcome by sickness, had found shelter in the house of a respectable widow, and had died there. The corpse was discovered by the Laird of Westerhall, a petty tyrant who had, in the days of the Covenant, professed inordinate zeal for the Presbyterian Church, who had, since the Restoration, purchased the favour of the government by apostasy, and who felt towards the party which he had deserted the implacable hatred of an apostate. This man pulled down the house of the poor woman, carried away her furniture, and, leaving her and her younger children to wander in the fields, dragged her son Andrew, who was still a lad, before Claverhouse, who happened to be marching through that part of the country. Claverhouse was just then strangely lenient. Some thought that he had not been quite himself since the death of the Christian carrier, ten days before. But Westerhall was eager to signalise his loyalty, and extorted a sullen consent. The guns were loaded, and the youth was told to pull his bonnet over his face. He refused, and stood confronting his murderers with the Bible in his hand. "I can look you in the face," he said; "I have done nothing of which I need be ashamed. But how will you look in that day when you shall be judged by what is written in this book?" He fell dead, and was buried in the moor.*

On the same day two women, Margaret Mac-

sometimes they questioned their own. Upon which he swore dreadfully, and said they should die presently, because they would not pray for Christ's vicegerent, and so, without one word more, commanded Thomas Cook to go to his prayers, for he should die."

In this narrative Wodrow saw nothing improbable; and I shall not easily be convinced that any writer now living understands the feelings and opinions of the Covenanters better than Wodrow did. (1857.)

* Wodrow, III. ix. 6. Cloud of Witnesses.

Digitized by Google

lachlan and Margaret Wilson, the former an aged widow, the latter a maiden of eighteen, suffered death for their religion in Wigtonshire. They were offered their lives if they would consent to abjure the cause of the insurgent Covenanters, and to attend the Episcopal worship. They refused; and they were sentenced to be drowned. They were carried to a spot which the Solway overflows twice a day, and were fastened to stakes fixed in the sand, between high and low water mark. The elder sufferer was placed near to the advancing flood, in the hope that her last agonies might terrify the younger into submission. The sight was dreadful. But the courage of the survivor was sustained by an enthusiasm as lofty as any that is recorded in martyrology. She saw the sea draw nearer and nearer, but gave no sign of alarm. She prayed and sang verses of psalms till the waves choked her voice. After she had tasted the bitterness of death, she was, by a cruel mercy, unbound and restored to life. When she came to herself, pitying friends and neighbours implored her to yield. "Dear Margaret, only say, God save the King!" The poor girl, true to her stern theology, gasped out, "May God save him, if it be God's will!" Her friends crowded round the presiding officer. "She has said it; indeed, sir, she has said it." "Will she take the abjuration?" he demanded. "Never!" she exclaimed. "I am Christ's: let me go!" And the waters closed over her for the last time.*

Thus was Scotland governed by that prince whom ignorant men have represented as a friend of religious liberty, whose misfortune it was to be too wise and

* Wodrow, III. ix. 6. The epitaph of Margaret Wilson, in the churchyard at Wigton, is printed in the Appendix to the Cloud of Witnesses:

"Murdered for owning Christ supreme
Head of his Church, and no more crime,
But her not owning Prelacy,
And not abjuring Presbytery,
Within the sea, tied to a stake,
She suffered for Christ Jesus' sake."

Digitized by Google

too good for the age in which he lived. Nay, even those laws which authorised him to govern thus were in his judgment reprehensibly lenient. While his officers were committing the murders which have just been related, he was urging the Scottish Parliament to pass a new Act compared with which all former Acts might be called merciful.

In England his authority, though great, was circumscribed by ancient and noble laws which even the Tories would not patiently have seen him infringe. Here he could not hurry Dissenters before military tribunals, or enjoy at Council the luxury of seeing them swoon in the boots. Here he could not drown young girls for refusing to take the abjuration, or shoot poor countrymen for doubting whether he was one of the elect. Yet even in England he continued to persecute the Puritans as far as his power extended, till events which will hereafter be related induced him to form the design of uniting Puritans and Papists in a coalition for the humiliation and spoliation of the Established Church.

Feeling of James towards the Quakers.

One sect of Protestant Dissenters indeed he, even at this early period of his reign, regarded with some tenderness, the Society of Friends. His partiality for that singular fraternity cannot be attributed to religious sympathy; for, of all who acknowledge the divine mission of Jesus, the Roman Catholic and the Quaker differ most widely. It may seem paradoxical to say that this very circumstance constituted a tie between the Roman Catholic and the Quaker; yet such was really the case. For they deviated in opposite directions so far from what the great body of the nation regarded as right, that even liberal men generally considered them both as lying beyond the pale of the largest toleration. Thus the two extreme sects, precisely because they were extreme sects, had a common interest distinct from the interest of the interme-

Digitized by Google

diate sects. The Quakers were also guiltless of all offence against James and his House. They had not been in existence as a community till the war between his father and the Long Parliament was drawing towards a close. They had been cruelly persecuted by some of the revolutionary governments. They had, since the Restoration, in spite of much ill usage, submitted themselves meekly to the royal authority. For they had, though reasoning on premises which the Anglican divines regarded as heterodox, arrived, like the Anglican divines, at the conclusion, that no excess of tyranny on the part of a prince can justify active resistance on the part of a subject. No libel on the government had ever been traced to a Quaker.* In no conspiracy against the government had a Quaker been implicated. The society had not joined in the clamour for the Exclusion Bill, and had solemnly condemned the Rye House plot as a hellish design and a work of the devil.† Indeed, the Friends then took very little part in civil contentions; for they were not, as now, congregated in large towns, but were generally engaged in agriculture, a pursuit from which they have been gradually driven by the vexations consequent on their strange scruple about paying tithe. They were, therefore, far removed from the scene of political strife. They also, even in domestic privacy, avoided on principle all political conversation. For such conversation was, in their opinion, unfavourable to their spirituality of mind, and tended to disturb the austere composure of their deportment. The yearly meetings of that age repeatedly admonished the brethren not to hold discourse touching affairs of state.‡ Even within the memory of persons now living those grave elders who retained the

* See the letter to King Charles II. prefixed to Barclay's Apology.

† Sewel's History of the Quakers, book x.

‡ Minutes of Yearly Meetings, 1689, 1690.

Digitized by Google

habits of an earlier generation systematically discouraged such worldly talk.* It was natural that James should make a wide distinction between these harmless people and those fierce and restless sects which considered resistance to tyranny as a Christian duty, which had, in Germany, France, and Holland, made war on legitimate princes, and which had, during four generations, borne peculiar enmity to the House of Stuart.

It happened, moreover, that it was possible to grant large relief to the Roman Catholic and to the Quaker without mitigating the sufferings of the Puritan sects. A law was in force which imposed severe penalties on every person who refused to take the oath of supremacy when required to do so. This law did not affect Presbyterians, Independents, or Baptists; for they were all ready to call God to witness that they renounced all spiritual connection with foreign prelates and potentates. But the Roman Catholic would not swear that the Pope had no jurisdiction in England, and the Quaker would not swear to anything. On the other hand, neither the Roman Catholic nor the Quaker was touched by the Five Mile Act, which, of all the laws in the Statute Book, was perhaps the most annoying to the Puritan Nonconformists.†

William Penn.

The Quakers had a powerful and zealous advocate at court. Though, as a class, they mixed little with the world, and shunned politics

* Clarkson on Quakerism; Peculiar Customs, chapter v.

† After this passage was written, I found, in the British Museum, a manuscript (Harl. MS. 7506.) entitled, "An Account of the Seizures, Sequestrations, great Spoil and Havock made upon the Estates of the several Protestant Dissenters called Quakers, upon Prosecution of old Statutes made against Papist and Popish Recusants." The manuscript is marked as having belonged to James, and appears to have been given by his confidential servant, Colonel Graham, to Lord Oxford. This circumstance appears to me to confirm the view which I have taken of the King's conduct towards the Quakers.

Digitized by Google

as a pursuit dangerous to their spiritual interests, one of them, widely distinguished from the rest by station and fortune, lived in the highest circles, and had constant access to the royal ear. This was the celebrated William Penn. His father had held great naval commands, had been a Commissioner of the Admiralty, had sate in Parliament, had received the honour of knighthood, and had been encouraged to expect a peerage. The son had been liberally educated, and had been designed for the profession of arms, but had, while still young, injured his prospects and disgusted his friends by joining what was then generally considered as a gang of crazy heretics. He had been sent sometimes to the Tower, and sometimes to Newgate. He had been tried at the Old Bailey for preaching in defiance of the law. After a time, however, he had been reconciled to his family, and had succeeded in obtaining such powerful protection that, while all the gaols of England were filled with his brethren, he was permitted, during many years, to profess his opinions without molestation. Towards the close of the late reign he had obtained, in satisfaction of an old debt due to him from the crown, the grant of an immense region in North America. In this tract, then peopled only by Indian hunters, he had invited his persecuted friends to settle. His colony was still in its infancy when James mounted the throne.

Between James and Penn there had long been a familiar acquaintance. The Quaker now became a courtier, and almost a favourite. He was every day summoned from the gallery into the closet, and sometimes had long audiences while peers were kept waiting in the antechambers. It was noised abroad that he had more real power to help and hurt than many nobles who filled high offices. He was soon surrounded by flatterers and suppliants. His house at Kensington was sometimes thronged, at his hour

Digitized by Google

of rising, by more than two hundred suitors.* He paid dear, however, for this seeming prosperity. Even his own sect looked coldly on him, and requited his services with obloquy. He was loudly accused of being a Papist, nay, a Jesuit. Some affirmed that he had been educated at St. Omers, and others that he had been ordained at Rome. These calumnies, indeed, could find credit only with the undiscerning multitude: but with these calumnies were mingled accusations much better founded.

To speak the whole truth concerning Penn is a task which requires some courage; for he is rather a mythical than a historical person. Rival nations and hostile sects have agreed in canonising him. England is proud of his name. A great commonwealth beyond the Atlantic regards him with a reverence similar to that which the Athenians felt for Theseus, and the Romans for Quirinus. The respectable society of which he was a member honours him as an apostle. By pious men of other persuasions he is generally regarded as a bright pattern of Christian virtue. Meanwhile admirers of a very different sort have sounded his praises. The French philosophers of the eighteenth century pardoned what they regarded as his superstitious fancies in consideration of his contempt for priests, and of his cosmopolitan benevolence, impartially extended to all races and to all creeds. His name has thus become, throughout all civilised countries, a synonyme for probity and philanthropy.

* Penn's visits to Whitehall, and levees at Kensington, are described with great vivacity, though in very bad Latin, by Gerard Croese. "Sumebat," he says, "rex sæpe secretum, non horarium, vero horarum plurium, in quo de variis rebus cum Penno serio sermonem conferebat, et interim differebat audire præcipuorum nobilium ordinem, qui hoc interim spatio in procœtone, in proximo, regem conventum præsto erant." Of the crowd of suitors at Penn's house, Croese says, "Visi quandoque de hoc genere hominum non minus bis centum." — Historia Quakeriana, lib. ii. 1695.

Digitized by Google

Nor is this high reputation altogether unmerited. Penn was without doubt a man of eminent virtues. He had a strong sense of religious duty and a fervent desire to promote the happiness of mankind. On one or two points of high importance he had notions more correct than were, in his day, common even among men of enlarged minds; and, as the proprietor and legislator of a province which, being almost uninhabited when it came into his possession, afforded a clear field for moral experiments, he had the rare good fortune of being able to carry his theories into practice without any compromise, and yet without any shock to existing institutions. He will always be mentioned with honour as a founder of a colony, who did not, in his dealings with a savage people, abuse the strength derived from civilisation, and as a lawgiver who, in an age of persecution, made religious liberty the corner stone of a polity. But his writings and his life furnish abundant proofs that he was not a man of strong sense. He had no skill in reading the characters of others. His confidence in persons less virtuous than himself led him into great errors and misfortunes. His enthusiasm for one great principle sometimes impelled him to violate other great principles which he ought to have held sacred. Nor was his rectitude altogether proof against the temptations to which it was exposed in that splendid and polite, but deeply corrupted society, with which he now mingled. The whole court was in a ferment with intrigues of gallantry and intrigues of ambition. The traffic in honours, places, and pardons was incessant. It was natural that a man who was daily seen at the palace, and who was known to have free access to majesty, should be frequently importuned to use his influence for purposes which a rigid morality must condemn. The integrity of Penn had stood firm against obloquy and persecution. But now, attacked by royal

Digitized by Google

smiles, by female blandishments, by the insinuating eloquence and delicate flattery of veteran diplomatists and courtiers, his resolution began to give way. Titles and phrases against which he had often borne his testimony dropped occasionally from his lips and his pen. It would be well if he had been guilty of nothing worse than such compliances with the fashions of the world. Unhappily it cannot be concealed that he bore a chief part in some transactions condemned, not merely by the rigid code of the society to which he belonged, but by the general sense of all honest men. He afterwards solemnly protested that his hands were pure from illicit gain, and that he had never received any gratuity from those whom he had obliged, though he might easily, while his influence at court lasted, have made a hundred and twenty thousand pounds.* To this assertion full credit is due. But bribes may be offered to vanity as well as to cupidity; and it is impossible to deny that Penn was cajoled into bearing a part in some unjustifiable transactions of which others enjoyed the profits.

Peculiar favour shown to Roman Catholics and Quakers.

The first use which he made of his credit was highly commendable. He strongly represented the sufferings of his brethren to the new King, who saw with pleasure that it was possible to grant indulgence to these quiet sectaries and to the Roman Catholics, without showing similar favour to other classes which were then under persecution. A list was framed of prisoners against whom proceedings had been instituted for not taking the oaths, or for not going to church, and of whose loyalty certificates had been produced to the government. These persons were discharged, and orders were given that no similar proceeding should

* "Twenty thousand into my pocket; and a hundred thousand into my province."—Penn's Letter to Popple.

Digitized by Google

be instituted till the royal pleasure should be further signified. In this way about fifteen hundred Quakers, and a still greater number of Roman Catholics, regained their liberty.*

And now the time had arrived when the English Parliament was to meet. The members of the House of Commons who had repaired to the capital were so numerous that there was much doubt whether their chamber, as it was then fitted up, would afford sufficient accommodation for them. They employed the days which immediately preceded the opening of the session in talking over public affairs with each other and with the agents of the government. A great meeting of the loyal party was held at the Fountain Tavern in the Strand; and Roger Lestrange, who had recently been knighted by the King, and returned to Parliament by the city of Winchester, took a leading part in their consultations.†

It soon appeared that a large portion of the Commons had views which did not altogether agree with those of the Court. The Tory country gentlemen were, with scarcely one exception, desirous to maintain the Test Act and the Habeas Corpus Act; and some among them talked of voting the revenue only for a term of years. But they were perfectly ready to enact severe laws against the Whigs, and would gladly have seen all the supporters of the Exclusion Bill made incapable of holding office. The King, on the other hand, desired to obtain from the Parlia-

* These orders, signed by Sunderland, will be found in Sewel's History. They bear date April 18. 1685. They are written in a style singularly obscure and intricate; but I think that I have exhibited the meaning correctly. I have not been able to find any proof that any person, not a Roman Catholic or a Quaker, regained his freedom under these orders. See Neal's History of the Puritans, vol. ii. chap. ii.; Gerard Croese, lib. ii. Croese estimates the number of Quakers liberated at fourteen hundred and sixty.

† Barillon, $\frac{\text{May 28.}}{\text{June 7.}}$ 1685. Observator, May 27. 1685; Sir J. Reresby's Memoirs.

Digitized by Google

ment a revenue for life, the admission of Roman Catholics to office, and the repeal of the Habeas Corpus Act. On these three objects his heart was set; and he was by no means disposed to accept as a substitute for them a penal law against Exclusionists. Such a law, indeed, would have been positively unpleasing to him; for one class of Exclusionists stood high in his favour, that class of which Sunderland was the representative, that class which had joined the Whigs in the days of the plot, merely because the Whigs were predominant, and which had changed with the change of fortune. James justly regarded these renegades as the most serviceable tools that he could employ. It was not from the stouthearted Cavaliers, who had been true to him in his adversity, that he could expect abject and unscrupulous obedience in his prosperity. The men who, impelled, not by zeal for liberty or for religion, but merely by selfish cupidity and selfish fear, had assisted to oppress him when he was weak, were the very men who, impelled by the same cupidity and the same fear, would assist him to oppress his people now that he was strong.* Though vindictive, he was not indiscriminately vindictive. Not a single instance can be mentioned in which he showed a generous compassion to those who had opposed him honestly and on public grounds. But he frequently spared and promoted those whom some vile motive had induced to injure him. For that meanness which marked them out as fit implements of tyranny was so precious in his estimation that he regarded it with some indulgence even when it was exhibited at his own expense.

The King's wishes were communicated through

* Lewis wrote to Barillon about this class of Exclusicnists as follows: "L'intérêt qu'ils auront à effacer cette tâche par des services considérables les portera, selon toutes les apparences, à le servir plus utilement que ne pourroient faire ceux qui ont toujours été les plus attachés à sa personne." May ½. 1685.

Digitized by Google

several channels to the Tory members of the Lower House. The majority was easily persuaded to forego all thoughts of a penal law against the Exclusionists, and to consent that His Majesty should have the revenue for life. But about the Test Act and the Habeas Corpus Act the emissaries of the Court could obtain no satisfactory assurances.*

Meeting of the English Parliament.

On the nineteenth of May the session was opened. The benches of the Commons presented a singular spectacle. That great party, which, in the last three Parliaments, had been predominant, had now dwindled to a pitiable minority, and was indeed little more than a fifteenth part of the House. Of the five hundred and thirteen knights and burgesses only a hundred and thirty five had ever sate in that place before. It is evident that a body of men so raw and inexperienced must have been, in some important qualities, far below the average of our representative assemblies.†

The management of the House was confided by James to two peers of the kingdom of Scotland. One of them, Charles Middleton, Earl of Middleton, after holding high office at Edinburgh, had, shortly before the death of the late King, been sworn of the English Privy Council, and appointed one of the Secretaries of State. With him was joined Richard Graham, Viscount Preston, who had long held the post of Envoy at Versailles.

Trevor chosen speaker.

The first business of the Commons was to elect a Speaker. Who should be the man, was a question which had been much debated in the cabinet. Guildford had recommended Sir Thomas Meres, who, like himself, ranked among the Trimmers. Jeffreys, who missed no opportunity of crossing the Lord Keeper, had pressed the claims of Sir John

* Barillon, May $\frac{1}{11}$. 1685; Sir John Reresby's Memoirs.

† Burnet, i. 626.; Evelyn's Diary, May 22. 1685.

Digitized by Google

Trevor. Trevor had been bred half a pettifogger and half a gambler, had brought to political life sentiments and principles worthy of both his callings, had become a parasite of the Chief Justice, and could, on occasion, imitate, not unsuccessfully, the vituperative style of his patron. The minion of Jeffreys was, as might have been expected, preferred by James, was proposed by Middleton, and was chosen without opposition.*

Character of Seymour.

Thus far all went smoothly. But an adversary of no common prowess was watching his time. This was Edward Seymour of Berry Pomeroy Castle, member for the city of Exeter Seymour's birth put him on a level with the noblest subjects in Europe. He was the right heir male of the body of that Duke of Somerset who had been brother in law of King Henry the Eighth, and Protector of the realm of England. In the limitation of the dukedom of Somerset, the elder son of the Protector had been postponed to the younger son. From the younger son the Dukes of Somerset were descended. From the elder son was descended the family which dwelt at Berry Pomeroy. Seymour's fortune was large, and his influence in the west of England extensive. Nor was the importance derived from descent and wealth the only importance which belonged to him. He was one of the most skilful debaters and men of business in the kingdom. He had sate many years in the House of Commons, had studied all its rules and usages, and thoroughly understood its peculiar temper. He had been elected Speaker in the late reign under circumstances which made that distinction peculiarly honourable. During several generations none but lawyers had been called to the chair; and he was the first country gentleman whose abilities and acquirements enabled him to

* Roger North's Life of Guildford, 218.; Bramston's Memoirs.

Digitized by Google

break that long prescription. He had subsequently held high political office, and had sate in the cabinet. But his haughty and unaccommodating temper had given so much disgust that he had been forced to retire. He was a Tory and a Churchman: he had strenuously opposed the Exclusion Bill: he had been persecuted by the Whigs in the day of their prosperity; and he could therefore safely venture to hold language for which any person suspected of republicanism would have been sent to the Tower. He had long been at the head of a strong parliamentary connection, which was called the Western Alliance, and which included many gentlemen of Devonshire, Somersetshire, and Cornwall.*

In every House of Commons, a member who unites eloquence, knowledge, and habits of business, to opulence and illustrious descent, must be highly considered. But in a House of Commons from which many of the most eminent orators and parliamentary tacticians of the age were excluded, and which was crowded with people who had never heard a debate, the influence of such a man was peculiarly formidable. Weight of moral character was indeed wanting to Edward Seymour. He was licentious, profane, corrupt, too proud to behave with common politeness, yet not too proud to pocket illicit gain. But he was so useful an ally, and so mischievous an enemy, that he was frequently courted even by those who most detested him.†

He was now in bad humour with the government. His interest had been weakened in some places by the remodelling of the western boroughs: his pride had been wounded by the elevation of Trevor to the chair; and he took an early opportunity of revenging himself.

* North's Life of Guildford, 228.; News from Westminster.

† Burnet, i. 382.; Letter from Lord Conway to Sir George Rawdon, Dec. 28. 1677, in the Rawdon Papers.

Digitized by Google

The King's speech to the Parliament.

On the twenty-second of May the Commons were summoned to the bar of the Lords; and the King, seated on his throne, made a speech to both Houses. He declared himself resolved to maintain the established government in Church and State. But he weakened the effect of this declaration by addressing an extraordinary admonition to the Commons. He was apprehensive, he said, that they might be inclined to dole out money to him, from time to time, in the hope that they should thus force him to call them frequently together. But he must warn them that he was not to be so dealt with, and that, if they wished him to meet them often, they must use him well. As it was evident that without money the government could not be carried on, these expressions plainly implied that, if they did not give him as much money as he wished, he would take it. Strange to say, this harangue was received with loud cheers by the Tory gentlemen at the bar. Such acclamations were then usual. It has now been, during many years, the grave and decorous usage of Parliaments to hear, in respectful silence, all expressions, acceptable or unacceptable, which are uttered from the throne.*

It was then the custom that, after the King had concisely explained his reasons for calling Parliament together, the minister who held the Great Seal should, at more length, explain to the Houses the state of public affairs. Guildford, in imitation of his predecessors, Clarendon, Bridgeman, Shaftesbury, and Nottingham, had prepared an elaborate oration, but found, to his great mortification, that his services were not wanted.†

* London Gazette, May 25. † North's Life of Guildford, 1685; Evelyn's Diary, May 22. 256.

1685

Digitized by Google

As soon as the Commons had returned to their own chamber, it was proposed that they should resolve themselves into a Committee, for the purpose of settling a revenue on the King. Debate in the Commons.

Then Seymour stood up. How he stood, looking like what he was, the chief of a dissolute and high spirited gentry, with the artificial ringlets clustering in fashionable profusion round his shoulders, and a mingled expression of voluptuousness and disdain in his eye and on his lip, the likenesses of him which still remain enable us to imagine. It was not, the haughty Cavalier said, his wish that the Parliament should withhold from the Crown the means of carrying on the government. But was there indeed a Parliament? Were there not on the benches many men who had, as all the world knew, no right to sit there, many men whose elections were tainted by corruption, many men forced by intimidation on reluctant voters, and many men returned by corporations which had no legal existence? Had not constituent bodies been remodelled, in defiance of royal charters and of immemorial prescription? Had not returning officers been everywhere the unscrupulous agents of the Court? Seeing that the very principle of representation had been thus systematically attacked, he knew not how to call the throng of gentlemen which he saw around him by the honourable name of a House of Commons. Yet never was there a time when it more concerned the public weal that the character of Parliament should stand high. Great dangers impended over the ecclesiastical and civil constitution of the realm. It was matter of vulgar notoriety, it was matter which required no proof, that the Test Act, the rampart of religion, and the Habeas Corpus Act, the rampart of liberty, were marked out for destruction. "Before we proceed to legislate on questions so momentous, let us at least ascertain whether we really are a legis- Speech of Seymour.

Digitized by Google

lature. Let our first proceeding be to enquire into the manner in which the elections have been conducted. And let us look to it that the enquiry be impartial. For, if the nation shall find that no redress is to be obtained by peaceful methods, we may perhaps ere long suffer the justice which we refuse to do." He concluded by moving that, before any supply was granted, the House would take into consideration petitions against returns, and that no member whose right to sit was disputed should be allowed to vote.

Not a cheer was heard. Not a member ventured to second the motion. Indeed, Seymour had said much that no other man could have said with impunity. The proposition fell to the ground, and was not even entered on the journals. But a mighty effect had been produced. Barillon informed his master that many who had not dared to applaud that remarkable speech had cordially approved of it, that it was the universal subject of conversation throughout London, and that the impression made on the public mind seemed likely to be durable.*

The Revenue voted.

The Commons went into committee without delay, and voted to the King, for life, the whole revenue enjoyed by his brother.†

Proceedings of the Commons concerning religion.

The zealous churchmen who formed the majority of the House seem to have been of opinion that the promptitude with which they had met the wish of James, touching the revenue, entitled them to expect some concession on his part. They said that much had been done to gratify him, and that they must now do something to gratify the nation. The House, therefore, resolved itself into a Grand Committee of Religion,

* Burnet, i. 639.; Evelyn's Diary, May 22. 1685; Barillon, May 23./June 2. and May 25./June 4. 1685. The silence of the journals perplexed Mr. Fox: but it is explained by the circumstance that Seymour's motion was not seconded.

† Journals, May 22. Stat. Jac. II. i. 1.

Digitized by Google

in order to consider the best means of providing for the security of the ecclesiastical establishment. In that Committee two resolutions were unanimously adopted. The first expressed fervent attachment to the Church of England. The second called on the King to put in execution the penal laws against all persons who were not members of that Church.*

The Whigs would doubtless have wished to see the Protestant dissenters tolerated, and the Roman Catholics alone persecuted. But the Whigs were a small and a disheartened minority. They therefore kept themselves as much as possible out of sight, dropped their party name, abstained from obtruding their peculiar opinions on a hostile audience, and steadily supported every proposition tending to disturb the harmony which as yet subsisted between the Parliament and the Court.

When the proceedings of the Committee of Religion were known at Whitehall, the King's anger was great. Nor can we justly blame him for resenting the conduct of the Tories. If they were disposed to require the rigorous execution of the penal code, they clearly ought to have supported the Exclusion Bill. For to place a Papist on the throne, and then to insist on his persecuting to the death the teachers of that faith in which alone, on his principles, salvation could be found, was monstrous. In mitigating by a lenient administration the severity of the bloody laws of Elizabeth, the King violated no constitutional principle. He only exerted a power which has always belonged to the crown. Nay, he only did what was afterwards done by a succession of sovereigns zealous for Protestantism, by William, by Anne, and by the princes of the House of Brunswick. Had he suffered Roman Catholic priests, whose lives he could save without infringing any law, to be

* Journals, May 26, 27. Sir J. Reresby's Memoirs.

Digitized by Google

hanged, drawn, and quartered, for discharging what he considered as their first duty, he would have drawn on himself the hatred and contempt even of those to whose prejudices he had made so shameful a concession; and, had he contented himself with granting to the members of his own Church a practical toleration by a large exercise of his unquestioned prerogative of mercy, posterity would have unanimously applauded him.

The Commons probably felt on reflection that they had acted absurdly. They were also disturbed by learning that the King, to whom they looked up with superstitious reverence, was greatly provoked. They made haste, therefore, to atone for their offence. In the House, they unanimously reversed the decision which, in the Committee, they had unanimously adopted, and passed a resolution importing that they relied with entire confidence on His Majesty's gracious promise to protect that religion which was dearer to them than life itself.*

Additional taxes voted.

Three days later the King informed the House that his brother had left some debts, and that the stores of the navy and ordnance were nearly exhausted. It was promptly resolved that new taxes should be imposed. The person on whom devolved the task of devising ways and means was Sir Dudley North, younger brother of the Lord Keeper. Dudley North was one of the ablest men of his time. He had early in life been sent to the Levant, and had there been long engaged in mercantile pursuits. Most men would, in such a situation, have allowed their faculties to rust. For at Smyrna and Constantinople there were few books and few intelligent companions. But the young factor had one of those vigorous understandings which are independent of external

Sir Dudley North.

* Commons' Journals, May 27. 1685.

Digitized by Google

aids. In his solitude he meditated deeply on the philosophy of trade, and thought out by degrees a complete and admirable theory, substantially the same with that which, a century later, was expounded by Adam Smith. After an exile of many years, Dudley North returned to England with a large fortune, and commenced business as a Turkey merchant in the City of London. His profound knowledge, both speculative and practical, of commercial matters, and the perspicuity and liveliness with which he explained his views, speedily introduced him to the notice of statesmen. The government found in him at once an enlightened adviser and an unscrupulous slave. For with his rare mental endowments were joined lax principles and an unfeeling heart. When the Tory reaction was in full progress, he had consented to be made Sheriff for the express purpose of assisting the vengeance of the court. His juries had never failed to find verdicts of Guilty; and, on a day of judicial butchery, carts, loaded with the legs and arms of quartered Whigs, were, to the great discomposure of his lady, driven to his fine house in Basinghall Street for orders. His services had been rewarded with the honour of knighthood, with an Alderman's gown, and with the office of Commissioner of the Customs. He had been brought into Parliament for Banbury, and, though a new member, was the person on whom the Lord Treasurer chiefly relied for the conduct of financial business in the Lower House.*

Though the Commons were unanimous in their resolution to grant a further supply to the crown, they were by no means agreed as to the sources from which that supply should be drawn. It was speedily determined that part of the sum which was required

* Roger North's Life of Sir Dudley North; Life of Lord Guildford, 166.; Mr. M'Culloch's Literature of Political Economy.

Digitized by Google

should be raised by laying an additional impost, for a term of eight years, on wine and vinegar: but something more than this was needed. Several absurd schemes were suggested. Many country gentlemen were disposed to put a heavy tax on all new buildings in the capital. Such a tax, it was hoped, would check the growth of a city which had long been regarded with jealousy and aversion by the rural aristocracy. Dudley North's plan was that additional duties should be imposed, for a term of eight years, on sugar and tobacco. A great clamour was raised. Colonial merchants, grocers, sugar bakers and tobacconists, petitioned the House and besieged the public offices. The people of Bristol, who were deeply interested in the trade with Virginia and Jamaica, sent up a deputation which was heard at the bar of the Commons. Rochester was for a moment staggered; but North's ready wit and perfect knowledge of trade prevailed, both in the Treasury and in the Parliament, against all opposition. The old members were amazed at seeing a man who had not been a fortnight in the House, and whose life had been chiefly passed in foreign countries, assume with confidence, and discharge with ability, all the functions of a Chancellor of the Exchequer.*

His plan was adopted; and thus the Crown was in possession of a clear income of about nineteen hundred thousand pounds, derived from England alone. Such an income was then more than sufficient for the support of the government in time of peace.†

Proceedings of the Lords.

The Lords had, in the meantime, discussed several important questions. The Tory party had always been strong among the peers. It

* Life of Dudley North, 176.; Lonsdale's Memoirs; Van Citters, June $\frac{13}{23}$. 1685.

† Commons' Journals, March 1. 1689.

Digitized by Google

included the whole bench of Bishops, and had been reinforced, during the four years which had elapsed since the last dissolution, by several fresh creations. Of the new nobles, the most conspicuous were the Lord Treasurer Rochester, the Lord Keeper Guildford, the Lord Chief Justice Jeffreys, the Lord Godolphin, and the Lord Churchill, who, after his return from Versailles, had been made a baron of England.

The peers early took into consideration the case of four members of their body who had been impeached in the late reign, but had never been brought to trial, and had, after a long confinement, been admitted to bail by the Court of King's Bench. Three of the noblemen who were thus under recognisances were Roman Catholics. The fourth was a Protestant of great note and influence, the Earl of Danby. Since he had fallen from power and had been accused of treason by the Commons, four Parliaments had been dissolved; but he had been neither acquitted nor condemned. In 1679 the Lords had considered, with reference to his situation, the question whether an impeachment was or was not terminated by a dissolution. They had resolved, after long debate and full examination of precedents, that the impeachment was still pending. That resolution they now rescinded. A few Whig nobles protested against this step, but to little purpose. The Commons silently acquiesced in the decision of the Upper House. Danby again took his seat among his peers, and became an active and powerful member of the Tory party.*

The constitutional question on which the Lords thus, in the short space of six years, pronounced two diametrically opposite decisions, slept during more than a century, and was at length revived by the

* Lords' Journals, March 18, 19. 1679, May 22. 1685.

Digitized by Google

dissolution which took place during the long trial of Warren Hastings. It was then necessary to determine whether the rule laid down in 1679, or the opposite rule laid down in 1685, was to be accounted the law of the land. The point was long debated in both Houses; and the best legal and parliamentary abilities which an age preeminently fertile both in legal and in parliamentary ability could supply were employed in the discussion. The lawyers were not unequally divided. Thurlow, Kenyon, Scott, and Erskine maintained that the dissolution had put an end to the impeachment. The contrary doctrine was held by Mansfield, Camden, Loughborough, and Grant. But among those statesmen who grounded their arguments, not on precedents and technical analogies, but on deep and broad constitutional principles, there was little difference of opinion. Pitt and Grenville, as well as Burke and Fox, held that the impeachment was still pending. Both Houses by great majorities set aside the decision of 1685, and pronounced the decision of 1679 to be in conformity with the law of Parliament.

Bill for reversing the attainder of Stafford.

Of the national crimes which had been committed during the panic excited by the fictions of Oates, the most signal had been the judicial murder of Stafford. The sentence of that unhappy nobleman was now regarded by all impartial persons as unjust. The principal witness for the prosecution had been convicted of a series of foul perjuries. It was the duty of the legislature, in such circumstances, to do justice to the memory of a guiltless sufferer, and to efface an unmerited stain from a name long illustrious in our annals. A bill for reversing the attainder of Stafford was passed by the Upper House, in spite of the murmurs of a few peers who were unwilling to admit that they had shed innocent blood. The Commons read the bill twice without a division, and ordered it to be com-

Digitized by Google

mitted. But, on the day appointed for the committee, arrived news that a formidable rebellion had broken out in the West of England. It was consequently necessary to postpone much important business. The amends due to the memory of Stafford were deferred, as was supposed, only for a short time. But the misgovernment of James in a few months completely turned the tide of public feeling. During several generations the Roman Catholics were in no condition to demand reparation for injustice, and accounted themselves happy if they were permitted to live unmolested in obscurity and silence. At length, in the reign of King George the Fourth, more than a hundred and forty years after the day on which the blood of Stafford was shed on Tower Hill, the tardy expiation was accomplished. A law annulling the attainder and restoring the injured family to its ancient dignities was presented to Parliament by the ministers of the crown, was eagerly welcomed by public men of all parties, and was passed without one dissentient voice.*

It is now necessary that I should trace the origin and progress of that rebellion by which the deliberations of the Houses were suddenly interrupted.

* Stat. 5 Geo. IV. c. 46.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER V.

Whig refugees on the Continent.

TOWARDS the close of the reign of Charles the Second, some Whigs who had been deeply implicated in the plot so fatal to their party, and who knew themselves to be marked out for destruction, had sought an asylum in the Low Countries.

These refugees were in general men of fiery temper and weak judgment. They were also under the influence of that peculiar illusion which seems to belong to their situation. A politician driven into banishment by a hostile faction generally sees the society which he has quitted through a false medium. Every object is distorted and discoloured by his regrets, his longings, and his resentments. Every little discontent appears to him to portend a revolution. Every riot is a rebellion. He cannot be convinced that his country does not pine for him as much as he pines for his country. He imagines that all his old associates, who still dwell at their homes and enjoy their estates, are tormented by the same feelings which make life a burden to himself. The longer his expatriation, the greater does this hallucination become. The lapse of time, which cools the ardour of the friends whom he has left behind, inflames his. Every month his impatience to revisit his native land increases; and every month his native land remembers and misses him less. This delusion becomes almost a madness when many exiles who suffer in the same cause herd together in a foreign country. Their chief employment is to talk of what they once were, and

Digitized by Google

of what they may yet be, to goad each other into animosity against the common enemy, to feed each other with extravagant hopes of victory and revenge. Thus they become ripe for enterprises which would at once be pronounced hopeless by any man whose passions had not deprived him of the power of calculating chances.

Their correspondents in England.

In this mood were many of the outlaws who had assembled on the Continent. The correspondence which they kept up with England was, for the most part, such as tended to excite their feelings and to mislead their judgment. Their information concerning the temper of the public mind was chiefly derived from the worst members of the Whig party, from men who were plotters and libellers by profession, who were pursued by the officers of justice, who were forced to skulk in disguise through back streets, and who sometimes lay hid for weeks together in cocklofts and cellars. The statesmen who had formerly been the ornaments of the Country Party, the statesmen who afterwards guided the councils of the Convention, would have given advice very different from that which was given by such men as John Wildman and Henry Danvers.

Wildman had served forty years before in the parliamentary army, but had been more distinguished there as an agitator than as a soldier, and had early quitted the profession of arms for pursuits better suited to his temper. His hatred of monarchy had induced him to engage in a long series of conspiracies, first against the Protector, and then against the Stuarts. But with Wildman's fanaticism was joined a tender care for his own safety. He had a wonderful skill in grazing the edge of treason. No man understood better how to instigate others to desperate enterprises by words which, when repeated to a jury, might seem innocent, or, at worst, ambiguous.

Digitized by Google

Such was his cunning that, though always plotting, though always known to be plotting, and though long malignantly watched by a vindictive government, he eluded every danger, and died in his bed, after having seen two generations of his accomplices die on the gallows.* Danvers was a man of the same class, hot-headed, but fainthearted, constantly urged to the brink of danger by enthusiasm, and constantly stopped on that brink by cowardice. He had considerable influence among a portion of the Baptists, had written largely in defence of their peculiar opinions, and had drawn down on himself the severe censure of the most respectable Puritans by attempting to palliate the crimes of Matthias and John of Leyden. It is probable that, had he possessed a little courage, he would have trodden in the footsteps of the wretches whom he defended. He was, at this time, concealing himself from the officers of justice; for warrants were out against him on account of a grossly calumnious paper of which the government had discovered him to be the author.†

Characters of the leading refugees.

It is easy to imagine what kind of intelligence and counsel men, such as have been described, were likely to send to the outlaws in the Netherlands. Of the general character of those outlaws an estimate may be formed from a few samples.

Ayloffe.

One of the most conspicuous among them was John Ayloffe, a lawyer connected by affinity with the Hydes, and through the Hydes, with James. Ayloffe had early made himself remarkable

* Clarendon's History of the Rebellion, book xiv.; Burnet's Own Times, i. 546. 625.; Wade's and Ireton's Narratives, Lansdowne MS. 1152.; West's information in the Appendix to Sprat's True Account.

† London Gazette, January 4. 168½; Ferguson MS. in Eachard's History, iii. 764.; Grey's Narrative; Sprat's True Account; Danvers's Treatise on Baptism; Danvers's Innocency and Truth vindicated; Crosby's History of the English Baptists.

Digitized by Google

by offering a whimsical insult to the government. At a time when the ascendency of the court of Versailles had excited general uneasiness, he had contrived to put a wooden shoe, the established type, among the English, of French tyranny, into the chair of the House of Commons. He had subsequently been concerned in the Whig plot; but there is no reason to believe that he was a party to the design of assassinating the royal brothers. He was a man of parts and courage; but his moral character did not stand high. The Puritan divines whispered that he was a careless Gallio or something worse, and that, whatever zeal he might profess for civil liberty, the Saints would do well to avoid all connection with him.*

Wade.

Nathaniel Wade was, like Ayloffe, a lawyer. He had long resided at Bristol, and had been celebrated in his own neighbourhood as a vehement republican. At one time he had formed a project of emigrating to New Jersey, where he expected to find institutions better suited to his taste than those of England. His activity in electioneering had introduced him to the notice of some Whig nobles. They had employed him professionally, and had, at length, admitted him to their most secret counsels. He had been deeply concerned in the scheme of insurrection, and had undertaken to head a rising in his own city. He had also been privy to the more odious plot against the lives of Charles and James. But he always declared that, though privy to it, he had abhorred it, and had attempted to dissuade his associates from carrying their design into effect. For a man bred to civil pursuits, Wade seems to have had,

* Sprat's True Account; Burnet, i. 634.; Wade's Confession, Harl. MS. 6845.

Lord Howard of Escrick accused Ayloffe of proposing to assassinate the Duke of York; but Lord Howard was an abject liar; and this story was not part of his original confession, but was added afterwards by way of supplement, and therefore deserves no credit whatever.

Digitized by Google

in an unusual degree, that sort of ability and that sort of nerve which make a good soldier. Unhappily his principles and his courage proved to be not of sufficient force to support him when the fight was over, and when, in a prison, he had to choose between death and infamy.*

Goodenough.

Another fugitive was Richard Goodenough, who had formerly been Under Sheriff of London. On this man his party had long relied for services of no honourable kind, and especially for the selection of jurymen not likely to be troubled with scruples in political cases. He had been deeply concerned in those dark and atrocious parts of the Whig plot which had been carefully concealed from the most respectable Whigs. Nor is it possible to plead, in extenuation of his guilt, that he was misled by inordinate zeal for the public good. For it will be seen that, after having disgraced a noble cause by his crimes, he betrayed it in order to escape from his well merited punishment.†

Rumbold.

Very different was the character of Richard Rumbold. He had held a commission in Cromwell's own regiment, had guarded the scaffold before the Banqueting House on the day of the great execution, had fought at Dunbar and Worcester, and had always shown in the highest degree the qualities which distinguished the invincible army in which he served, courage of the truest temper, fiery enthusiasm, both political and religious, and with that enthusiasm, all the power of selfgovernment which is characteristic of men trained in well disciplined camps to command and to obey. When the republican troops were disbanded, Rumbold became a

* Wade's Confession, Harl. MS. 6845.; Lansdowne MS. 1152.; Holloway's narrative in the Appendix to Sprat's True Account. Wade owned that Holloway had told nothing but truth.

† Sprat's True Account and Appendix, *passim*.

Digitized by Google

maltster, and carried on his trade near Hoddesdon, in that building from which the Rye House plot derives its name. It had been suggested, though not absolutely determined, in the conferences of the most violent and unscrupulous of the malecontents, that armed men should be stationed in the Rye House to attack the Guards who were to escort Charles and James from Newmarket to London. In these conferences Rumbold had borne a part from which he would have shrunk with horror, if his clear understanding had not been overclouded, and his manly heart corrupted, by party spirit.*

A more important exile was Ford Grey, Lord Grey of Wark. He had been a zealous Exclusionist, had concurred in the design of insurrection, and had been committed to the Tower, but had succeeded in making his keepers drunk, and in effecting his escape to the Continent. His parliamentary abilities were great, and his manners pleasing: but his life had been sullied by a great domestic crime. His wife was a daughter of the noble house of Berkeley. Her sister, the Lady Henrietta Berkeley, was allowed to associate and correspond with him as with a brother by blood. A fatal attachment sprang up. The high spirit and strong passions of Lady Henrietta broke through all restraints of virtue and decorum. A scandalous elopement disclosed to the whole kingdom the shame of two illustrious families. Grey and some of the agents who had served him in his amour were brought to trial on a charge of conspiracy. A scene unparalleled in our legal history was exhibited in the Court of King's Bench. The seducer appeared with dauntless front, accompanied by his paramour. Nor did the great

Lord Grey.

* Sprat's True Account and Appendix; Proceedings against Rumbold in the Collection of State Trials; Burnet's Own Times, i. 633.; Appendix to Fox's History, No. IV.

Digitized by Google

Whig lords flinch from their friend's side even in that extremity. Those whom he had wronged stood over against him, and were moved to transports of rage by the sight of him. The old Earl of Berkeley poured forth reproaches and curses on the wretched Henrietta. The Countess gave evidence broken by many sobs, and at length fell down in a swoon. The jury found a verdict of Guilty. When the court rose, Lord Berkeley called on all his friends to help him to seize his daughter. The partisans of Grey rallied round her. Swords were drawn on both sides: a skirmish took place in Westminster Hall; and it was with difficulty that the Judges and tipstaves parted the combatants. In our time such a trial would be fatal to the character of a public man; but in that age the standard of morality among the great was so low, and party spirit was so violent, that Grey still continued to have considerable influence, though the Puritans, who formed a strong section of the Whig party, looked somewhat coldly on him.*

One part of the character, or rather, it may be, of the fortune, of Grey deserves notice. It was admitted that everywhere, except on the field of battle, he showed a high degree of courage. More than once, in embarrassing circumstances, when his life and liberty were at stake, the dignity of his deportment and his perfect command of all his faculties extorted praise from those who neither loved nor esteemed him. But as a soldier he incurred, less perhaps by his fault than by mischance, the degrading imputation of personal cowardice.

Monmouth.

In this respect he differed widely from his friend the Duke of Monmouth. Ardent and intrepid on the field of battle, Monmouth was everywhere else effeminate and irresolute. The

* Grey's Narrative; his trial in the Collection of State Trials; Sprat's True Account.

Digitized by Google

accident of his birth, his personal courage, and his superficial graces, had placed him in a post for which he was altogether unfitted. After witnessing the ruin of the party of which he had been the nominal head, he had retired to Holland. The Prince and Princess of Orange had now ceased to regard him as a rival. They received him most hospitably; for they hoped that, by treating him with kindness, they should establish a claim to the gratitude of his father. They knew that paternal affection was not yet wearied out, that letters and supplies of money still came secretly from Whitehall to Monmouth's retreat, and that Charles frowned on those who sought to pay their court to him by speaking ill of his banished son. The Duke had been encouraged to expect that, in a very short time, if he gave no new cause of displeasure, he would be recalled to his native land, and restored to all his high honours and commands. Animated by such expectations he had been the life of the Hague during the late winter. He had been the most conspicuous figure at a succession of balls in that splendid Orange Hall, which blazes on every side with the most ostentatious colouring of Jordaens and Hondthorst.* He had taught the English country dance to the Dutch ladies, and had in his turn learned from them to skate on the canals. The Princess had accompanied him in his expeditions on the ice; and the figure which she made there, poised on one leg, and clad in petticoats shorter than are generally worn by ladies so strictly decorous, had caused some wonder and mirth to the foreign ministers. The sullen gravity which had been characteristic of the Stadtholder's court seemed to have vanished before the influence of the fascinating Englishman. Even the stern and pensive William

* In the Pepysian Collection is a print representing one of the balls which about this time William and Mary gave in the Oranje Zaal.

Digitized by Google

relaxed into good humour when his brilliant guest appeared.*

Monmouth meanwhile carefully avoided all that could give offence in the quarter to which he looked for protection. He saw little of any Whigs, and nothing of those violent men who had been concerned in the worst part of the Whig plot. He was therefore loudly accused, by his old associates, of fickleness and ingratitude.†

Ferguson.

By none of the exiles was this accusation urged with more vehemence and bitterness than by Robert Ferguson, the Judas of Dryden's great satire. Ferguson was by birth a Scot; but England had long been his residence. At the time of the Restoration, indeed, he had held a living in Kent. He had been bred a Presbyterian; but the Presbyterians had cast him out, and he had become an Independent. He had been master of an academy which the Dissenters had set up at Islington as a rival to Westminster School and the Charter House; and he had preached to large congregations at a meeting house in Moorfields. He had also published some theological treatises which may still be found in the dusty recesses of a few old libraries; but, though texts of scripture were always on his lips, those who had pecuniary transactions with him soon found him to be a mere swindler.

At length he turned his attention almost entirely from theology to the worst part of politics. He belonged to the class whose office it is to render in troubled times to exasperated parties those services from which honest men shrink in disgust and prudent men in fear, the class of fanatical knaves. Violent, malignant, regardless of truth, insensible to shame,

* Avaux Neg. January 25. 1685. Letter from James to the Princess of Orange dated January 168¼, among Birch's Extracts in the British Museum.

† Grey's Narrative; Wade's Confession, Lansdowne MS. 1152.

Digitized by Google

insatiable of notoriety, delighting in intrigue, in tumult, in mischief for its own sake, he toiled during many years in the darkest mines of faction. He lived among libellers and false witnesses. He was the keeper of a secret purse from which agents too vile to be acknowledged received hire, and the director of a secret press whence pamphlets, bearing no name, were daily issued. He boasted that he had contrived to scatter lampoons about the terrace of Windsor, and even to lay them under the royal pillow. In this way of life he was put to many shifts, was forced to assume many names, and at one time had four different lodgings in different corners of London. He was deeply engaged in the Rye House plot. There is, indeed, reason to believe that he was the original author of those sanguinary schemes which brought so much discredit on the whole Whig party. When the conspiracy was detected and his associates were in dismay, he bade them farewell with a laugh, and told them that they were novices, that he had been used to flight, concealment, and disguise, and that he should never leave off plotting while he lived. He escaped to the Continent. But it seemed that even on the Continent he was not secure. The English envoys at foreign courts were directed to be on the watch for him. The French government offered a reward of five hundred pistoles to any who would seize him. Nor was it easy for him to escape notice; for his broad Scotch accent, his tall and lean figure, his lantern jaws, the gleam of his sharp eyes which were always overhung by his wig, his cheeks inflamed by an eruption, his shoulders deformed by a stoop, and his gait distinguished from that of other men by a peculiar shuffle, made him remarkable wherever he appeared. But, though he was, as it seemed, pursued with peculiar animosity, it was whispered that this animosity was feigned, and that the officers of justice had secret orders not to see him.

Digitized by Google

That he was really a bitter malecontent can scarcely be doubted. But there is strong reason to believe that he provided for his own safety by pretending at Whitehall to be a spy on the Whigs, and by furnishing the government with just so much information as sufficed to keep up his credit. This hypothesis furnishes a simple explanation of what seemed to his associates to be his unnatural recklessness and audacity. Being himself out of danger, he always gave his vote for the most violent and perilous course, and sneered very complacently at the pusillanimity of men who, not having taken the infamous precautions on which he relied, were disposed to think twice before they placed life, and objects dearer than life, on a single hazard.*

As soon as he was in the Low Countries he began to form new projects against the English government, and found among his fellow emigrants men ready to listen to his evil counsels. Monmouth, however, stood obstinately aloof; and, without the help of Monmouth's immense popularity, it was impossible to effect anything. Yet such was the impatience and rashness of the exiles that they tried to find another leader. They sent an embassy to that solitary retreat on the shores of Lake Leman where Edmund Ludlow, once conspicuous among the chiefs of the parliamentary army and among the members of the High Court of Justice, had, during many years, hidden himself from the vengeance of the restored Stuarts. The stern old regicide, however, refused to quit his hermitage. His work, he said, was done. If England was still to be saved, she must be saved by younger men.†

* Burnet, i. 542.; Wood, Ath. Ox. under the name of Owen; Absalom and Achitophel, part ii.; Eachard, iii. 682. 697.; Sprat's True Account, *passim*; Lond. Gaz. Aug. 6. 1683; Nonconformist's Memorial; North's Examen, 393.

† Wade's Confession, Harl. MS. 6845.

Digitized by Google

The unexpected demise of the crown changed the whole aspect of affairs. Any hope which the proscribed Whigs might have cherished of returning peaceably to their native land was extinguished by the death of a careless and goodnatured prince, and by the accession of a prince obstinate in all things, and especially obstinate in revenge. Ferguson was in his element. Destitute of the talents both of a writer and of a statesman, he had in a high degree the unenviable qualifications of a tempter; and now, with the malevolent activity and dexterity of an evil spirit, he ran from outlaw to outlaw, chattered in every ear, and stirred up in every bosom savage animosities and wild desires.

He no longer despaired of being able to seduce Monmouth. The situation of that unhappy young man was completely changed. While he was dancing and skating at the Hague, and expecting every day a summons to London, he was overwhelmed with misery by the tidings of his father's death and of his uncle's accession. During the night which followed the arrival of the news, those who lodged near him could distinctly hear his sobs and his piercing cries. He quitted the Hague the next day, having solemnly pledged his word, both to the Prince and to the Princess of Orange, not to attempt anything against the government of England, and having been supplied by them with money to meet immediate demands.*

The prospect which lay before Monmouth was not a bright one. There was now no probability that he would be recalled from banishment. On the Continent his life could no longer be passed amidst the splendour and festivity of a court. His cousins at the Hague seem to have really regarded him with

* Avaux Neg. Feb. 20. 22. 1685; Monmouth's letter to James from Ringwood

Digitized by Google

kindness; but they could no longer countenance him openly without serious risk of producing a rupture between England and Holland. William offered a kind and judicious suggestion. The war which was then raging in Hungary, between the Emperor and the Turks, was watched by all Europe with interest almost as great as that which the Crusades had excited five hundred years earlier. Many gallant gentlemen, both Protestant and Catholic, were fighting as volunteers in the common cause of Christendom. The Prince advised Monmouth to repair to the Imperial camp, and assured him that, if he would do so, he should not want the means of making an appearance befitting an English nobleman.* This counsel was excellent: but the Duke could not make up his mind. He retired to Brussels accompanied by Henrietta Wentworth, Baroness Wentworth of Nettlestede, a damsel of high rank and ample fortune, who loved him passionately, who had sacrificed for his sake her maiden honour and the hope of a splendid alliance, who had followed him into exile, and whom he believed to be his wife in the sight of heaven. Under the soothing influence of female friendship, his lacerated mind healed fast. He seemed to have found happiness in obscurity and repose, and to have forgotten that he had been the ornament of a splendid court and the head of a great party, that he had commanded armies, and that he had aspired to a throne.

But he was not suffered to remain quiet. Ferguson employed all his powers of temptation. Grey, who knew not where to turn for a pistole, and was ready for any undertaking, however desperate, lent his aid. No art was spared which could draw Monmouth from retreat. To the first invitations which

* Boyer's History of King William the Third, 2d edition, 1703, vol. i. 160.

Digitized by Google

he received from his old associates he returned unfavourable answers. He pronounced the difficulties of a descent on England insuperable, protested that he was sick of public life, and begged to be left in the enjoyment of his newly found happiness. But he was little in the habit of resisting skilful and urgent importunity. It is said, too, that he was induced to quit his retirement by the same powerful influence which had made that retirement delightful. Lady Wentworth wished to see him a King. Her rents, her diamonds, her credit were put at his disposal. Monmouth's judgment was not convinced; but he had not firmness to resist such solicitations.*

Scotch refugees.

By the English exiles he was joyfully welcomed, and unanimously acknowledged as their head. But there was another class of emigrants who were not disposed to recognise his supremacy. Misgovernment, such as had never been known in the southern part of our island, had driven from Scotland to the Continent many fugitives, the intemperance of whose political and religious zeal was proportioned to the oppression which they had undergone. These men were not willing to follow an English leader. Even in destitution and exile they retained their punctilious national pride, and would not consent that their country should be, in their persons, degraded into a province. They had a captain of their own, Archibald, ninth Earl of Argyle, who, as chief of the great tribe of

Earl of Argyle.

* Welwood's Memoirs, App. xv.; Burnet, i. 630. Grey told a somewhat different story: but he told it to save his life. The Spanish ambassador at the English court, Don Pedro de Ronquillo, in a letter to the governor of the Low Countries written about this time, sneers at Monmouth for living on the bounty of a fond woman, and hints a very unfounded suspicion that the Duke's passion was altogether interested. "Hallandose hoy tan falto de medios que ha menester trasformarse en Amor con Mi ledi en vista de la necesidad de poder subsistir." — Ronquillo to Grana, $\frac{\text{March 30.}}{\text{April 9.}}$ 1685.

Digitized by Google

Campbell, was known among the population of the Highlands by the proud name of Mac Callum More. His father, the Marquess of Argyle, had been the head of the Scotch Covenanters, had greatly contributed to the ruin of Charles the First, and was not thought by the Royalists to have atoned for this offence by consenting to bestow the empty title of King, and a state prison in a palace, on Charles the Second. After the return of the royal family the Marquess was put to death. His marquisate became extinct; but his son was permitted to inherit the ancient earldom, and was still among the greatest, if not the greatest, of the nobles of Scotland. The Earl's conduct during the twenty years which followed the Restoration had been, as he afterwards thought, criminally moderate. He had, on some occasions, opposed the administration which afflicted his country: but his opposition had been languid and cautious. His compliances in ecclesiastical matters had given scandal to rigid Presbyterians; and so far had he been from showing any inclination to resistance that, when the Covenanters had been persecuted into insurrection, he had brought into the field a large body of his dependents to support the government.

Such had been his political course until the Duke of York came down to Edinburgh armed with the whole regal authority. The despotic viceroy soon found that he could not expect entire support from Argyle. Since the most powerful chief in the kingdom could not be gained, it was thought necessary that he should be destroyed. On grounds so frivolous that even the spirit of party and the spirit of chicane were ashamed of them, he was brought to trial for treason, convicted, and sentenced to death. The partisans of the Stuarts afterwards asserted that it was never meant to carry this sentence into effect, and that the only object of the prosecution was to frighten him into ceding his extensive jurisdiction

Digitized by Google

in the Highlands. Whether James designed, as his enemies suspected, to commit murder, or only, as his friends affirmed, to commit extortion by threatening to commit murder, cannot now be ascertained. "I know nothing of the Scotch law," said Halifax to King Charles; "but this I know, that we should not hang a dog here on the grounds on which my Lord Argyle has been sentenced."*

Argyle escaped in disguise to England, and thence passed over to Friesland. In that secluded province his father had bought a small estate, as a place of refuge for the family in civil troubles. It was said, among the Scots, that this purchase had been made in consequence of the predictions of a Celtic seer, to whom it had been revealed that Mac Callum More would one day be driven forth from the ancient mansion of his race at Inverary.† But it is probable that the politic Marquess had been warned rather by the signs of the times than by the visions of any prophet. In Friesland Earl Archibald resided during some time so quietly that it was not generally known whither he had fled. From his retreat he carried on a correspondence with his friends in Great Britain, was a party to the Whig conspiracy, and concerted with the chiefs of that conspiracy a plan for invading Scotland.‡ This plan had been dropped upon the detection of the Rye House Plot, but became again the subject of his thoughts after the demise of the crown.

He had, during his residence on the Continent, reflected much more deeply on religious questions than in the preceding years of his life. In one

* Proceedings against Argyle in the Collection of State Trials; Burnet, i. 521.; A true and plain Account of the Discoveries made in Scotland, 1684; The Scotch Mist Cleared; Sir George Mackenzie's Vindication; Lord Fountainhall's Chronological Notes.

† Information of Robert Smith in the Appendix to Sprat's True Account.

‡ True and plain Account of the Discoveries made in Scotland.

Digitized by Google

respect the effect of these reflections on his mind had been pernicious. His partiality for the synodical form of church government now amounted to bigotry. When he remembered how long he had conformed to the established worship, he was overwhelmed with shame and remorse, and showed too many signs of a disposition to atone for his defection by violence and intolerance. He had however, in no long time, an opportunity of proving that the fear and love of a higher Power had nerved him for the most formidable conflicts by which human nature can be tried.

To his companions in adversity his assistance was of the highest moment. Though proscribed and a fugitive, he was still, in some sense, the most powerful subject in the British dominions. In wealth, even before his attainder, he was probably inferior, not only to the great English nobles, but to some of the opulent esquires of Kent and Norfolk. But his patriarchal authority, an authority which no wealth could give and which no attainder could take away, made him, as a leader of an insurrection, truly formidable. No southern lord could feel any confidence that, if he ventured to resist the government, even his own gamekeepers and huntsmen would stand by him. An Earl of Bedford, an Earl of Devonshire, could not engage to bring ten men into the field. Mac Callum More, penniless and deprived of his earldom, might, at any moment, raise a serious civil war. He had only to show himself on the coast of Lorn; and an army would, in a few days, gather round him. The force, which, in favourable circumstances, he could bring into the field, amounted to five thousand fighting men, devoted to his service, accustomed to the use of target and broadsword, not afraid to encounter regular troops even in the open plain, and perhaps superior to regular troops in the qualifications requisite for the defence of wild mountain passes, hidden in mist, and torn by headlong

Digitized by Google

torrents. What such a force, well directed, could effect, even against veteran regiments and skilful commanders, was proved, a few years later, at Killiecrankie.

Sir Patrick Hume.

But, strong as was the claim of Argyle to the confidence of the exiled Scots, there was a faction among them which regarded him with no friendly feeling, and which wished to make use of his name and influence, without entrusting to him any real power. The chief of this faction was a lowland gentleman, who had been implicated in the Whig plot, and had with difficulty eluded the vengeance of the court, Sir Patrick Hume, of Polwarth, in Berwickshire. Great doubt has been thrown on his integrity, but without sufficient reason. It must, however, be admitted that he injured his cause by perverseness as much as he could have done by treachery. He was a man incapable alike of leading and of following, conceited, captious, and wrong-headed, an endless talker, a sluggard in action against the enemy, and active only against his own allies. With Hume was closely connected another Scottish exile of great note, who had many of the same faults, Sir John Cochrane, second son of the Earl of Dundonald.

Sir John Cochrane.

Fletcher of Saltoun.

A far higher character belonged to Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun, a man distinguished by learning and eloquence, distinguished also by courage, disinterestedness, and public spirit, but of an irritable and impracticable temper. Like many of his most illustrious contemporaries, Milton for example, Harrington, Marvel, and Sidney, Fletcher had, from the misgovernment of several successive princes, conceived a strong aversion to hereditary monarchy. Yet he was no democrat. He was the head of an ancient Norman house, and was proud of his descent. He was a fine speaker and a fine writer, and was proud of his intellectual superiority. Both

Digitized by Google

in his character of gentleman, and in his character of scholar, he looked down with disdain on the common people, and was so little disposed to entrust them with political power that he thought them unfit even to enjoy personal freedom. It is a curious circumstance that this man, the most honest, fearless, and uncompromising republican of his time, should have been the author of a plan for reducing a large part of the working classes of Scotland to slavery. He bore, in truth, a lively resemblance to those Roman Senators who, while they hated the name of King, guarded the privileges of their order with inflexible pride against the encroachments of the multitude, and governed their bondmen and bondwomen by means of the stocks and the scourge.

Amsterdam was the place where the leading emigrants, Scotch and English, assembled. Argyle repaired thither from Friesland, Monmouth from Brabant. It soon appeared that the fugitives had scarcely anything in common except hatred of James and impatience to return from banishment. The Scots were jealous of the English, the English of the Scots. Monmouth's high pretensions were offensive to Argyle, who, proud of ancient nobility and of a legitimate descent from kings, was by no means inclined to do homage to the offspring of a vagrant and ignoble love. But of all the dissensions by which the little band of outlaws was distracted the most serious was that which arose between Argyle and a portion of his own followers. Some of the Scottish exiles had, in a long course of opposition to tyranny, been excited into a morbid state of understanding and temper, which made the most just and necessary restraint insupportable to them. They knew that without Argyle they could do nothing. They ought to have known that, unless they wished to run headlong to ruin, they must either repose full confidence

Unreasonable conduct of the Scotch refugees.

Digitized by Google

in their leader, or relinquish all thoughts of military enterprise. Experience has fully proved that in war every operation, from the greatest to the smallest, ought to be under the absolute direction of one mind, and that every subordinate agent, in his degree, ought to obey implicitly, strenuously, and with the show of cheerfulness, orders which he disapproves, or of which the reasons are kept secret from him. Representative assemblies, public discussions, and all the other checks by which, in civil affairs, rulers are restrained from abusing power, are out of place in a camp. Machiavel justly imputed many of the disasters of Venice and Florence to the jealousy which led those republics to interfere with every act of their generals.* The Dutch practice of sending to an army deputies, without whose consent no great blow could be struck, was almost equally pernicious. It is undoubtedly by no means certain that a captain, who has been entrusted with dictatorial power in the hour of peril, will quietly surrender that power in the hour of triumph; and this is one of the many considerations which ought to make men hesitate long before they resolve to vindicate public liberty by the sword. But, if they determine to try the chance of war, they will, if they are wise, entrust to their chief that plenary authority without which war cannot be well conducted. It is possible that, if they give him that authority, he may turn out a Cromwell or a Napoleon. But it is almost certain that, if they withhold from him that authority, their enterprises will end like the enterprise of Argyle.

Some of the Scottish emigrants, heated with republican enthusiasm, and utterly destitute of the skill necessary to the conduct of great affairs, employed all their industry and ingenuity, not in collecting means for the attack which they were about

* Discorsi sopra la prima Deca di Tito Livio lib. ii. cap. 33.

Digitized by Google

to make on a formidable enemy, but in devising restraints on their leader's power and securities against his ambition. The selfcomplacent stupidity with which they insisted on organising an army as if they had been organising a commonwealth would be incredible if it had not been frankly and even boastfully recorded by one of themselves.*

Arrangement for an attempt on England and Scotland.

At length all differences were compromised. It was determined that an attempt should be forthwith made on the western coast of Scotland, and that it should be promptly followed by a descent on England.

Argyle was to hold the nominal command in Scotland: but he was placed under the control of a Committee which reserved to itself all the most important parts of the military administration. This Committee was empowered to determine where the expedition should land, to appoint officers, to superintend the levying of troops, to dole out provisions and ammunition. All that was left to the general was to direct the evolutions of the army in the field, and he was forced to promise that even in the field, except in the case of a surprise, he would do nothing without the assent of a council of war.

Monmouth was to command in England. His soft mind had, as usual, taken an impress from the society which surrounded him. Ambitious hopes, which had seemed to be extinguished, revived in his bosom. He remembered the affection with which he had been constantly greeted by the common people in town and country, and expected that they would now rise by hundreds of thousands to welcome him. He remembered the good will which the soldiers had always borne him, and flattered himself that they would come over to him by regiments. Encouraging messages reached him in quick succession from London.

* See Sir Patrick Hume's Narrative, *passim*.

Digitized by Google

He was assured that the violence and injustice with which the elections had been carried on had driven the nation mad, that the prudence of the leading Whigs had with difficulty prevented a sanguinary outbreak on the day of the coronation, and that all the great Lords who had supported the Exclusion Bill were impatient to rally round him. Wildman, who loved to talk treason in parables, sent to say that the Earl of Richmond, just two hundred years before, had landed in England with a handful of men, and had a few days later been crowned, on the field of Bosworth, with the diadem taken from the head of Richard. Danvers undertook to raise the City. The Duke was deceived into the belief that, as soon as he set up his standard, Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Hampshire, Cheshire would rise in arms.* He consequently became eager for the enterprise from which a few weeks before he had shrunk. His countrymen did not impose on him restrictions so elaborately absurd as those which the Scotch emigrants had devised. All that was required of him was to promise that he would not assume the regal title till his pretensions had been submitted to the judgment of a free Parliament.

It was determined that two Englishmen, Ayloffe and Rumbold, should accompany Argyle to Scotland, and that Fletcher should go with Monmouth to England. Fletcher, from the beginning, had augured ill of the enterprise: but his chivalrous spirit would not suffer him to decline a risk which his friends seemed eager to encounter. When Grey repeated with approbation what Wildman had said about Richmond and Richard, the well read and thoughtful Scot justly remarked that there was a great difference between the fifteenth century and the seventeenth. Richmond was assured of the support of barons, each of

* Grey's Narrative; Wade's Confession, Harl. MS. 6845.

Digitized by Google

whom could bring an army of feudal retainers into the field; and Richard had not one regiment of regular soldiers.*

The exiles were able to raise, partly from their own resources and partly from the contributions of well wishers in Holland, a sum sufficient for the two expeditions. Very little was obtained from London. Six thousand pounds had been expected thence. But instead of the money came excuses from Wildman, which ought to have opened the eyes of all who were not wilfully blind. The Duke made up the deficiency by pawning his own jewels and those of Lady Wentworth. Arms, ammunition, and provisions were bought, and several ships which lay at Amsterdam were freighted.†

John Locke.

It is remarkable that the most illustrious and the most grossly injured man among the British exiles stood far aloof from these rash counsels. John Locke hated tyranny and persecution as a philosopher; but his intellect and his temper preserved him from the violence of a partisan. He had lived on confidential terms with Shaftesbury, and had thus incurred the displeasure of the court. Locke's prudence had, however, been such that it would have been to little purpose to bring him even before the corrupt and partial tribunals of that age. In one point, however, he was vulnerable. He was a student of Christ Church in the University of Oxford. It was determined to drive from that celebrated college the greatest man of whom it could ever boast. But this was not easy. Locke had, at Oxford, abstained from expressing any opinion on the politics of the day. Spies had been set about him. Doctors of Divinity and Masters of Arts had not been ashamed to perform the vilest of all offices, that of watching the lips of a companion in order to report his words

* Burnet, i. 631. † Grey's Narrative.

Digitized by Google

to his ruin. The conversation in the hall had been purposely turned to irritating topics, to the Exclusion Bill, and to the character of the Earl of Shaftesbury, but in vain. Locke neither broke out nor dissembled, but maintained such steady silence and composure as forced the tools of power to own with vexation that never man was so complete a master of his tongue and of his passions. When it was found that treachery could do nothing, arbitrary power was used. After vainly trying to inveigle Locke into a fault, the government resolved to punish him without one. Orders came from Whitehall that he should be ejected; and those orders the Dean and Canons made haste to obey.

Locke was travelling on the Continent for his health when he learned that he had been deprived of his home and of his bread without a trial or even a notice. The injustice with which he had been treated would have excused him if he had resorted to violent methods of redress. But he was not to be blinded by personal resentment: he augured no good from the schemes of those who had assembled at Amsterdam; and he quietly repaired to Utrecht, where, while his partners in misfortune were planning their own destruction, he employed himself in writing his celebrated letter on Toleration.*

Preparations made by government for the defence of Scotland.

The English government was early apprised that something was in agitation among the outlaws. An invasion of England seems not to have been at first expected; but it was apprehended that Argyle would shortly

* Le Clerc's Life of Locke; Lord King's Life of Locke; Lord Grenville's Oxford and Locke. Locke must not be confounded with the Anabaptist Nicholas Look, whose name is spelt Locke in Grey's Confession, and who is mentioned in the Lansdowne MS. 1152., and in the Buccleuch narrative appended to Mr. Rose's dissertation. I should hardly think it necessary to make this remark, but that the similarity of the two names appears to have misled a man so well acquainted with the history of those times as Speaker Onslow. See his note on Burnet, i. 629.

Digitized by Google

appear in arms among his clansmen. A proclamation was accordingly issued directing that Scotland should be put into a state of defence. The militia was ordered to be in readiness. All the clans hostile to the name of Campbell were set in motion. John Murray, Marquess of Athol, was appointed Lord Lieutenant of Argyleshire, and, at the head of a great body of his followers, occupied the castle of Inverary. Some suspected persons were arrested. Others were compelled to give hostages. Ships of war were sent to cruise near the isle of Bute; and part of the army of Ireland was moved to the coast of Ulster.*

Conversation of James with the Dutch ambassadors.

While these preparations were making in Scotland, James called into his closet Arnold Van Citters, who had long resided in England as Ambassador from the United Provinces, and Everard Van Dykvelt, who, after the death of Charles, had been sent by the States General on a special mission of condolence and congratulation. The King said that he had received from unquestionable sources intelligence of designs which were forming against his throne by his banished subjects in Holland. Some of the exiles were cutthroats, whom nothing but the special providence of God had prevented from committing a foul murder; and among them was the owner of the spot which had been fixed for the butchery. "Of all men living," said the King, "Argyle has the greatest means of annoying me; and of all places Holland is that whence a blow may be best aimed against me." The Dutch envoys assured His Majesty that what he had said should instantly be communicated to the government which they represented, and expressed their full confidence that every exertion would be made to satisfy him.†

* Wodrow, book iii. chap. ix.; London Gazette, May 11. 1685; Barillon, May ¼.

† Register of the Proceedings of the States General, May ½. 1685.

Digitized by Google

They were justified in expressing this confidence. Both the Prince of Orange and the States General were, at this time, most desirous that the hospitality of their country should not be abused for purposes of which the English government could justly complain. James had lately held language which encouraged the hope that he would not patiently submit to the ascendency of France. It seemed probable that he would consent to form a close alliance with the United Provinces and the House of Austria. There was, therefore, at the Hague, an extreme anxiety to avoid all that could give him offence. The personal interest of William was also on this occasion identical with the interest of his father in law.

Ineffectual attempts to prevent Argyle from sailing.

But the case was one which required rapid and vigorous action; and the nature of the Batavian institutions made such action almost impossible. The Union of Utrecht, rudely formed, amidst the agonies of a revolution, for the purpose of meeting immediate exigencies, had never been deliberately revised and perfected in a time of tranquillity. Every one of the seven commonwealths which that Union had bound together retained almost all the rights of sovereignty, and asserted those rights punctiliously against the central government. As the federal authorities had not the means of exacting prompt obedience from the provincial authorities, so the provincial authorities had not the means of exacting prompt obedience from the municipal authorities. Holland alone contained eighteen cities, each of which was, for many purposes, an independent state, jealous of all interference from without. If the rulers of such a city received from the Hague an order which was unpleasing to them, they either neglected it altogether, or executed it languidly and tardily. In some town councils, indeed, the influence of the Prince of Orange was all powerful. But unfortunately the

Digitized by Google

place where the British exiles had congregated, and where their ships had been fitted out, was the rich and populous Amsterdam; and the magistrates of Amsterdam were the heads of the faction hostile to the federal government and to the House of Nassau. The naval administration of the United Provinces was conducted by five distinct boards of Admiralty. One of those boards sate at Amsterdam, was partly nominated by the authorities of that city, and seems to have been entirely animated by their spirit.

All the endeavours of the federal government to effect what James desired were frustrated by the evasions of the functionaries of Amsterdam, and by the blunders of Colonel Bevil Skelton, who had just arrived at the Hague as envoy from England. Skelton had been born in Holland during the English troubles, and was therefore supposed to be peculiarly qualified for his post*; but he was, in truth, unfit for that and for every other diplomatic situation. Excellent judges of character pronounced him to be the most shallow, fickle, passionate, presumptuous, and garrulous of men.† He took no serious notice of the proceedings of the refugees till three vessels which had been equipped for the expedition to Scotland were safe out of the Zuyder Zee, till the arms, ammunition, and provisions were on board, and till the passengers had embarked. Then, instead of applying, as he should have done, to the States General, who sate close to his own door, he sent a messenger to the magistrates of Amsterdam, with a request that the suspected ships might be detained. The magistrates of Amsterdam answered that the entrance of the Zuyder Zee was out of their jurisdiction, and referred him to the federal government. It was notorious that this was a mere excuse,

* This is mentioned in his credentials dated on the 16th of March 168$\frac{4}{5}$.

† Bonrepaux to Seignelay, February $\frac{4}{14}$. 1686.

Digitized by Google

and that, if there had been any real wish at the Stadthouse of Amsterdam to prevent Argyle from sailing, no difficulties would have been made. Skelton now addressed himself to the States General. They showed every disposition to comply with his demand, and, as the case was urgent, departed from the course which they ordinarily observed in the transaction of business. On the same day on which he made his application to them, an order, drawn in exact conformity with his request, was despatched to the Admiralty of Amsterdam. But this order, in consequence of some misinformation, did not correctly describe the situation of the ships. They were said to be in the Texel. They were in the Vlie. The Admiralty of Amsterdam made this error a plea for doing nothing; and, before the error could be rectified, the three ships had sailed.*

Departure of Argyle from Holland.

The last hours which Argyle passed on the coast of Holland were hours of great anxiety. Near him lay a Dutch man of war whose broadside would in a moment have put an end to his expedition. Round his little fleet a boat was rowing, in which were some persons with telescopes whom he suspected to be spies. But no effectual step was taken for the purpose of detaining him; and on the afternoon of the second of May he stood out to sea before a favourable breeze.

The voyage was prosperous. On the sixth the Orkneys were in sight. Argyle very unwisely anchored off Kirkwall, and allowed two of his followers to go on shore there. The Bishop ordered them to be arrested. The refugees proceeded to hold a long and animated debate on this misadventure: for, from the beginning to the end of their expedition, however

* Avaux Neg. $\frac{\text{April 30.}}{\text{May 10.}}$, May $\frac{1}{11}$, May $\frac{5}{15}$. 1685; Sir Patrick Hume's Narrative; Letter from the Admiralty of Amsterdam to the States General, dated June 20. 1685; Memorial of Skelton, delivered to the States General, May 10. 1685.

Digitized by Google

languid and irresolute their conduct might be, they never in debate wanted spirit or perseverance. Some were for an attack on Kirkwall. Some were for proceeding without delay to Argyleshire. At last the Earl seized some gentlemen who lived near the coast of the island, and proposed to the Bishop an exchange of prisoners. The Bishop returned no answer; and the fleet, after losing three days, sailed away.

He lands in Scotland.

This delay was full of danger. It was speedily known at Edinburgh that the rebel squadron had touched at the Orkneys. Troops were instantly put in motion. When the Earl reached his own province, he found that preparations had been made to repel him. At Dunstaffnage he sent his second son Charles on shore to call the Campbells to arms. But Charles returned with gloomy tidings. The herdsmen and fishermen were indeed ready to rally round Mac Callum More; but, of the heads of the clan, some were in confinement, and others had fled. Those gentlemen who remained at their homes were either well affected to the government or afraid of moving, and refused even to see the son of their chief. From Dunstaffnage the small armament proceeded to Campbelltown, near the southern extremity of the peninsula of Kintyre. Here the Earl published a manifesto, drawn up in Holland, under the direction of the Committee, by James Stewart, a Scotch advocate, whose pen was, a few months later, employed in a very different way. In this paper were set forth, with a strength of language sometimes approaching to scurrility, many real and some imaginary grievances. It was hinted that the late King had died by poison. A chief object of the expedition was declared to be the entire suppression, not only of Popery, but of Prelacy, which was termed the most bitter root and offspring of Popery; and all good Scotchmen were exhorted to do valiantly for the cause of their country and of their God.

Digitized by Google

Zealous as Argyle was for what he considered as pure religion, he did not scruple to practise one rite half Popish and half Pagan. The mysterious cross of yew, first set on fire, and then quenched in the blood of a goat, was sent forth to summon all the Campbells, from sixteen to sixty. The isthmus of Tarbet was appointed for the place of gathering. The muster, though small indeed when compared with what it would have been if the spirit and strength of the clan had been unbroken, was still formidable. The whole force assembled amounted to about eighteen hundred men. Argyle divided his mountaineers into three regiments, and proceeded to appoint officers.

His disputes with his followers.

The bickerings which had begun in Holland had never been intermitted during the whole course of the expedition: but at Tarbet they became more violent than ever. The Committee wished to interfere even with the patriarchal dominion of the Earl over the Campbells, and would not allow him to settle the military rank of his kinsmen by his own authority. While these disputatious meddlers tried to wrest from him his power over the Highlands, they carried on their own correspondence with the Lowlands, and received and sent letters which were never communicated to the nominal General. Hume and his confederates had reserved to themselves the superintendence of the stores, and conducted this important part of the administration of war with a laxity hardly to be distinguished from dishonesty, suffered the arms to be spoiled, wasted the provisions, and lived riotously at a time when they ought to have set to all beneath them an example of abstemiousness.

The great question was whether the Highlands or the Lowlands should be the seat of war. The Earl's first object was to establish his authority over his own domains, to drive out the invading clans which had been poured from Perthshire into Argyleshire,

Digitized by Google

and to take possession of the ancient seat of his family at Inverary. He might then hope to have four or five thousand claymores at his command. With such a force he would be able to defend that wild country against the whole power of the kingdom of Scotland, and would also have secured an excellent base for offensive operations. This seems to have been the wisest course open to him. Rumbold, who had been trained in an excellent military school, and who, as an Englishman, might be supposed to be an impartial umpire between the Scottish factions, did all in his power to strengthen the Earl's hands. But Hume and Cochrane were utterly impracticable. Their jealousy of Argyle was, in truth, stronger than their wish for the success of the expedition. They saw that, among his own mountains and lakes, and at the head of an army chiefly composed of his own tribe, he would be able to bear down their opposition, and to exercise the full authority of a General. They muttered that the only men who had the good cause at heart were the Lowlanders, and that the Campbells took up arms neither for liberty nor for the Church of God, but for Mac Callum More alone. Cochrane declared that he would go to Ayrshire if he went by himself, and with nothing but a pitchfork in his hand. Argyle, after long resistance, consented, against his better judgment, to divide his little army. He remained with Rumbold in the Highlands. Cochrane and Hume were at the head of the force which sailed to invade the Lowlands.

Ayrshire was Cochrane's object: but the coast of Ayrshire was guarded by English frigates; and the adventurers were under the necessity of running up the estuary of the Clyde to Greenock, then a small fishing village consisting of a single row of thatched hovels, now a great and flourishing port, of which the customs amount to more than five times the whole revenue which the Stuarts derived from the kingdom

Digitized by Google

of Scotland. A party of militia lay at Greenock: but Cochrane, who wanted provisions, was determined to land. Hume objected. Cochrane was peremptory, and ordered an officer, named Elphinstone, to take twenty men in a boat to the shore. But the wrangling spirit of the leaders had infected all ranks. Elphinstone answered that he was bound to obey only reasonable commands, that he considered this command as unreasonable, and, in short, that he would not go. Major Fullarton, a brave man, esteemed by all parties, but peculiarly attached to Argyle, undertook to land with only twelve men, and did so in spite of a fire from the coast. A slight skirmish followed. The militia fell back. Cochrane entered Greenock and procured a supply of meal, but found no disposition to insurrection among the people.

Temper of the Scotch nation.

In fact, the state of public feeling in Scotland was not such as the exiles, misled by the infatuation common in all ages to exiles, had supposed it to be. The government was, indeed, hateful and hated. But the malecontents were divided into parties which were almost as hostile to one another as to their rulers; nor was any of those parties eager to join the invaders. Many thought that the insurrection had no chance of success. The spirit of many had been effectually broken by long and cruel oppression. There was, indeed, a class of enthusiasts who were little in the habit of calculating chances, and whom oppression had not tamed but maddened. But these men saw little difference between Argyle and James. Their wrath had been heated to such a temperature that what every body else would have called boiling zeal seemed to them Laodicean lukewarmness. The Earl's past life had been stained by what they regarded as the vilest apostasy. The very Highlanders whom he now summoned to extirpate Prelacy he had a few years before summoned to defend it. And were slaves who knew

Digitized by Google

nothing and cared nothing about religion, who were ready to fight for synodical government, for Episcopacy, for Popery, just as Mac Callum More might be pleased to command, fit allies for the people of God? The manifesto, indecent and intolerant as was its tone, was, in the view of these fanatics, a cowardly and worldly performance. A settlement such as Argyle would have made, such as was afterwards made by a mightier and happier deliverer, seemed to them not worth a struggle. They wanted not only freedom of conscience for themselves, but absolute dominion over the consciences of others; not only the Presbyterian doctrine, polity, and worship, but the Covenant in its utmost rigour. Nothing would content them but that every end for which civil society exists should be sacrificed to the ascendency of a theological system. One who believed no form of church government to be worth a breach of Christian charity, and who recommended comprehension and toleration, was, in their phrase, halting between Jehovah and Baal. One who condemned such acts as the murder of Cardinal Beatoun and Archbishop Sharpe fell into the same sin for which Saul had been rejected from being King over Israel. All the rules, by which, among civilised and Christian men, the horrors of war are mitigated, were abominations in the sight of the Lord. Quarter was to be neither taken nor given. A Malay running a muck, a mad dog pursued by a crowd, were the models to be imitated by warriors fighting in just selfdefence. To reasons such as guide the conduct of statesmen and generals the minds of these zealots were absolutely impervious. That a man should venture to urge such reasons was sufficient evidence that he was not one of the faithful. If the divine blessing were withheld, little would be effected by crafty politicians, by veteran captains, by cases of arms from Holland, or by regiments of unregenerate Celts from the mountains of Lorn. If, on

Digitized by Google

the other hand, the Lord's time were indeed come, he could still, as of old, cause the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and could save alike by many and by few. The broadswords of Athol and the bayonets of Claverhouse would be put to rout by weapons as insignificant as the sling of David or the pitcher of Gideon.*

Cochrane, having found it impossible to raise the population on the south of the Clyde, rejoined Argyle, who was in the island of Bute. The Earl now again proposed to make an attempt upon Inverary. Again he encountered a pertinacious opposition. The seamen sided with Hume and Cochrane. The Highlanders were absolutely at the command of their chieftain. There was reason to fear that the two parties would come to blows; and the dread of such a disaster induced the Committee to make some concession. The castle of Ealan Ghierig, situated at the mouth of Loch Riddan, was selected to be the chief place of arms. The military stores were disembarked there. The squadron was moored close to the walls in a place where it was protected by rocks and shallows such as, it was thought, no frigate could pass. Outworks were thrown up. A battery was planted with some small guns taken from the ships. The command of the fort was most unwisely given to Elphinstone, who had already proved himself much more disposed to argue with his commanders than to fight the enemy.

And now, during a few hours, there was some show of vigour. Rumbold took the castle of Ardkinglass. The Earl skirmished successfully with Athol's troops, and was about to advance on Inverary, when

* If any person is inclined to suspect that I have exaggerated the absurdity and ferocity of these men, I would advise him to read two books, which will convince him that I have rather softened than overcharged the portrait, the Hind Let Loose, and Faithful Contendings Displayed.

Digitized by Google

alarming news from the ships and factions in the Committee forced him to turn back. The King's frigates had come nearer to Ealan Ghierig than had been thought possible. The Lowland gentlemen positively refused to advance further into the Highlands. Argyle hastened back to Ealan Ghierig. There he proposed to make an attack on the frigates. His ships, indeed, were ill fitted for such an encounter. But they would have been supported by a flotilla of thirty large fishing boats, each well manned with armed Highlanders. The Committee, however, refused to listen to this plan, and effectually counteracted it by raising a mutiny among the sailors.

All was now confusion and despondency. The provisions had been so ill managed by the Committee that there was no longer food for the troops. The Highlanders consequently deserted by hundreds; and the Earl, brokenhearted by his misfortunes, yielded to the urgency of those who still pertinaciously insisted that he should march into the Lowlands.

The little army therefore hastened to the shore of Loch Long, passed that inlet by night in boats, and landed in Dumbartonshire. Hither, on the following morning, came news that the frigates had forced a passage, that all the Earl's ships had been taken, and that Elphinstone had fled from Ealan Ghierig without a blow, leaving the castle and stores to the enemy.

All that remained was to invade the Lowlands under every disadvantage. Argyle resolved to make a bold push for Glasgow. But, as soon as this resolution was announced, the very men, who had, up to that moment, been urging him to hasten into the low country, took fright, argued, remonstrated, and, when argument and remonstrance proved vain, laid a scheme for seizing the boats, making their own escape, and leaving their General and his clansmen to conquer or perish unaided. This scheme failed; and

Digitized by Google

the poltroons who had formed it were compelled to share with braver men the risks of the last venture.

During the march through the country which lies between Loch Long and Loch Lomond, the insurgents were constantly infested by parties of militia. Some skirmishes took place, in which the Earl had the advantage; but the bands which he repelled, falling back before him, spread the tidings of his approach, and, soon after he had crossed the river Leven, he found a strong body of regular and irregular troops prepared to encounter him.

He was for giving battle. Ayloffe was of the same opinion. Hume, on the other hand, declared that to fight would be madness. He saw one regiment in scarlet. More might be behind. To attack such a force was to rush on certain death. The best course was to remain quiet till night, and then to give the enemy the slip.

A sharp altercation followed, which was with difficulty quieted by the mediation of Rumbold. It was now evening. The hostile armies encamped at no great distance from each other. The Earl ventured to propose a night attack, and was again overruled.

Since it was determined not to fight, nothing was left but to take the step which Hume had recommended. There was a chance that, by decamping secretly, and hastening all night across heaths and morasses, the Earl might gain many miles on the enemy, and might reach Glasgow without further obstruction. The watch fires were left burning; and the march began. And now disaster followed disaster fast. The guides mistook the track across the moors, and led the army into boggy ground. Military order could not be preserved by undisciplined and disheartened soldiers under a dark sky, and on a treacherous and uneven soil. Panic after panic spread through the broken ranks. Every sight and sound was thought to indicate the approach

Argyle's forces dispersed.

Digitized by Google

of pursuers. Some of the officers contributed to spread the terror which it was their duty to calm. The army had become a mob; and the mob melted fast away. Great numbers fled under cover of the night. Rumbold and a few other brave men whom no danger could have scared lost their way, and were unable to rejoin the main body. When the day broke, only five hundred fugitives, wearied and dispirited, assembled at Kilpatrick.

All thought of prosecuting the war was at an end: and it was plain that the chiefs of the expedition would have sufficient difficulty in escaping with their lives. They fled in different directions. Hume reached the Continent in safety. Cochrane was taken and sent up to London. Argyle hoped to find a secure asylum under the roof of one of his old servants who lived near Kilpatrick. But this hope was disappointed; and he was forced to cross the Clyde. He assumed the dress of a peasant, and pretended to be the guide of Major Fullarton, whose courageous fidelity was proof to all danger. The friends journeyed together through Renfrewshire as far as Inchinnan. At that place the Black Cart and the White Cart, two streams which now flow through prosperous towns, and turn the wheels of many factories, but which then held their quiet course through moors and sheepwalks, mingle before they join the Clyde. The only ford by which the travellers could cross was guarded by a party of militia. Some questions were asked. Fullarton tried to draw suspicion on himself, in order that his companion might escape unnoticed. But the minds of the questioners misgave them that the guide was not the rude clown that he seemed. They laid hands on him. He broke loose and sprang into the water, but was instantly chased. He stood at bay for a short time against five assailants. But he had no arms except his pocket pistols, and they were so wet,

Argyle a prisoner.

Digitized by Google

in consequence of his plunge, that they would not go off. He was struck to the ground with a broadsword, and secured.

He owned himself to be the Earl of Argyle, probably in the hope that his great name would excite the awe and pity of those who had seized him. And indeed they were much moved. For they were plain Scotchmen of humble rank, and, though in arms for the crown, probably cherished a preference for the Calvinistic church government and worship, and had been accustomed to reverence their captive as the head of an illustrious house and as a champion of the Protestant religion. But, though they were evidently touched, and though some of them even wept, they were not disposed to relinquish a large reward and to incur the vengeance of an implacable government. They therefore conveyed their prisoner to Renfrew. The man who bore the chief part in the arrest was named Riddell. On this account the whole race of Riddells was, during more than a century, held in abhorrence by the great tribe of Campbell. Within living memory, when a Riddell visited a fair in Argyleshire, he found it necessary to assume a false name.

And now commenced the brightest part of Argyle's career. His enterprise had hitherto brought on him nothing but reproach and derision. His great error was that he did not resolutely refuse to accept the name without the power of a general. Had he remained quietly at his retreat in Friesland, he would in a few years have been recalled with honour to his country, and would have been conspicuous among the ornaments and the props of constitutional monarchy. Had he conducted his expedition according to his own views, and carried with him no followers but such as were prepared implicitly to obey all his orders, he might possibly have effected something great. For what he wanted as a captain seems to

Digitized by Google

have been, not courage, nor activity, nor skill, but simply authority. He should have known that of all wants this is the most fatal. Armies have triumphed under leaders who possessed no very eminent qualifications. But what army commanded by a debating club ever escaped discomfiture and disgrace?

The great calamity which had fallen on Argyle had this advantage, that it enabled him to show, by proofs not to be mistaken, what manner of man he was. From the day when he quitted Friesland to the day when his followers separated at Kilpatrick, he had never been a free agent. He had borne the responsibility of a long series of measures which his judgment disapproved. Now at length he stood alone. Captivity had restored to him the noblest kind of liberty, the liberty of governing himself in all his words and actions according to his own sense of the right and of the becoming. From that moment he became as one inspired with new wisdom and virtue. His intellect seemed to be strengthened and concentrated, his moral character to be at once elevated and softened. The insolence of the conquerors spared nothing that could try the temper of a man proud of ancient nobility and of patriarchal dominion. The prisoner was dragged through Edinburgh in triumph. He walked on foot, bareheaded, up the whole length of that stately street which, overshadowed by dark and gigantic piles of stone, leads from Holyrood House to the Castle. Before him marched the hangman, bearing the ghastly instrument which was to be used at the quartering block. The victorious party had not forgotten that, thirty five years before this time, the father of Argyle had been at the head of the faction which put Montrose to death. Before that event the houses of Graham and Campbell had borne no love to each other; and they had ever since been at deadly feud. Care was taken that the prisoner

Digitized by Google

should pass through the same gate and the same streets through which Montrose had been led to the same doom.* When the Earl reached the Castle his legs were put in irons, and he was informed that he had but a few days to live. It had been determined not to bring him to trial for his recent offence, but to put him to death under the sentence pronounced against him several years before, a sentence so flagitiously unjust that the most servile and obdurate lawyers of that bad age could not speak of it without shame.

But neither the ignominious procession up the High Street, nor the near view of death, had power to disturb the gentle and majestic patience of Argyle. His fortitude was tried by a still more severe test. A paper of interrogatories was laid before him by order of the Privy Council. He replied to those questions to which he could reply without danger to any of his friends, and refused to say more. He was told that unless he returned fuller answers he should be put to the torture. James, who was doubtless sorry that he could not feast his own eyes with the sight of Argyle in the boots, sent down to Edinburgh positive orders that nothing should be omitted which could wring out of the traitor information against all who had been concerned in the treason. But menaces were vain. With torments and death in immediate prospect Mac Callum More thought far less of himself than of his poor clansmen. "I was busy this day," he wrote from his cell, "treating for them, and in some hopes. But this evening orders came that I must die upon Monday or Tuesday; and I am to be put to the torture if I answer not all questions upon oath. Yet I hope God shall support me."

* A few words which were in the first five editions have been omitted in this place. Here and in another passage I had, as Mr. Aytoun has observed, mistaken the City Guards, which were commanded by an officer named Graham, for the Dragoons of Graham of Claverhouse.

Digitized by Google

The torture was not inflicted. Perhaps the magnanimity of the victim had moved the conquerors to unwonted compassion. He himself remarked that at first they had been very harsh to him, but that they soon began to treat him with respect and kindness. God, he said, had melted their hearts. It is certain that he did not, to save himself from the utmost cruelty of his enemies, betray any of his friends. On the last morning of his life he wrote these words: "I have named none to their disadvantage. I thank God he hath supported me wonderfully."

He composed his own epitaph, a short poem, full of meaning and spirit, simple and forcible in style, and not contemptible in versification. In this little piece he complained that, though his enemies had repeatedly decreed his death, his friends had been still more cruel. A comment on these expressions is to be found in a letter which he addressed to a lady residing in Holland. She had furnished him with a large sum of money for his expedition, and he thought her entitled to a full explanation of the causes which had led to his failure. He acquitted his coadjutors of treachery, but described their folly, their ignorance, and their factious perverseness, in terms which their own testimony has since proved to have been richly deserved. He afterwards doubted whether he had not used language too severe to become a dying Christian, and, in a separate paper, begged his friend to suppress what he had said of these men. "Only this I must acknowledge," he mildly added; "they were not governable."

Most of his few remaining hours were passed in devotion, and in affectionate intercourse with some members of his family. He professed no repentance on account of his last enterprise, but bewailed, with great emotion, his former compliance in spiritual things with the pleasure of the government. He had, he said, been justly punished. One who had

Digitized by Google

so long been guilty of cowardice and dissimulation was not worthy to be the instrument of salvation to the State and Church. Yet the cause, he frequently repeated, was the cause of God, and would assuredly triumph. "I do not," he said, "take on myself to be a prophet. But I have a strong impression on my spirit, that deliverance will come very suddenly." It is not strange that some zealous Presbyterians should have laid up his saying in their hearts, and should, at a later period, have attributed it to divine inspiration.

So effectually had religious faith and hope, co-operating with natural courage and equanimity, composed his spirits, that, on the very day on which he was to die, he dined with appetite, conversed with gaiety at table, and, after his last meal, lay down, as he was wont, to take a short slumber, in order that his body and mind might be in full vigour when he should mount the scaffold. At this time one of the Lords of the Council, who had probably been bred a Presbyterian, and had been seduced by interest to join in oppressing the Church of which he had once been a member, came to the Castle with a message from his brethren, and demanded admittance to the Earl. It was answered that the Earl was asleep. The Privy Councillor thought that this was a subterfuge, and insisted on entering. The door of the cell was softly opened; and there lay Argyle on the bed, sleeping, in his irons, the placid sleep of infancy. The conscience of the renegade smote him. He turned away sick at heart, ran out of the Castle, and took refuge in the dwelling of a lady of his family who lived hard by. There he flung himself on a couch, and gave himself up to an agony of remorse and shame. His kinswoman, alarmed by his looks and groans, thought that he had been taken with sudden illness, and begged him to drink a cup of sack. "No, no," he said; "that will do

Digitized by Google

me no good." She prayed him to tell her what had disturbed him. "I have been," he said, "in Argyle's prison. I have seen him within an hour of eternity, sleeping as sweetly as ever man did. But as for me——."

And now the Earl had risen from his bed, and had prepared himself for what was yet to be endured. He was first brought down the High Street to the Council House, where he was to remain during the short interval which was still to elapse before the execution. During that interval he asked for pen and ink, and wrote to his wife: "Dear heart, God is unchangeable: He hath always been good and gracious to me; and no place alters it. Forgive me all my faults; and now comfort thyself in Him, in whom only true comfort is to be found. The Lord be with thee, bless and comfort thee, my dearest. Adieu."

His execution.

It was now time to leave the Council House. The divines who attended the prisoner were not of his own persuasion; but he listened to them with civility, and exhorted them to caution their flocks against those doctrines which all Protestant churches unite in condemning. He mounted the scaffold, where the rude old guillotine of Scotland, called the Maiden, awaited him, and addressed the people in a speech, tinctured with the peculiar phraseology of his sect, but breathing the spirit of serene piety. His enemies, he said, he forgave, as he hoped to be forgiven. Only a single acrimonious expression escaped him. One of the episcopal clergymen who attended him went to the edge of the scaffold, and called out in a loud voice, "My Lord dies a Protestant." "Yes," said the Earl, stepping forward, "and not only a Protestant, but with a heart hatred of Popery, of Prelacy, and of all superstition." He then embraced his friends, put into their hands some tokens of remembrance for his wife

Digitized by Google

and children, kneeled down, laid his head on the block, prayed during a few minutes, and gave the signal to the executioner. His head was fixed on the top of the Tolbooth, where the head of Montrose had formerly decayed.*

The head of the brave and sincere, though not blameless Rumbold, was already on the West Port of Edinburgh. Surrounded by factious and cowardly associates, he had, through the whole campaign, behaved himself like a soldier trained in the school of the great Protector, had in council strenuously supported the authority of Argyle, and had in the field been distinguished by tranquil intrepidity. After the dispersion of the army he was set upon by a party of militia. He defended himself desperately, and would have cut his way through them, had they not hamstringed his horse. He was brought to Edinburgh mortally wounded. The wish of the government was that he should be executed in England. But he was so near death that, if he was not hanged in Scotland, he could not be hanged at all; and the pleasure of hanging him was one which the conquerors could not bear to forego. It was indeed not to be expected that they would show much lenity to one who was regarded as the chief of the Rye House plot, and who was the owner of the building from which that plot took its name: but the insolence with which they treated the dying man seems to our more

Execution of Rumbold.

* The authors from whom I have taken the history of Argyle's expedition are Sir Patrick Hume, who was an eyewitness of what he related, and Wodrow, who had access to materials of the greatest value, among which were the Earl's own papers. Wherever there is a question of veracity between Argyle and Hume, I have no doubt that Argyle's narrative ought to be followed. See also Burnet, i. 631. and the life of Bresson, published by Dr. Mac Crie. The account of the Scotch rebellion in the Life of James the Second, is a ridiculous romance, not written by the King himself, nor derived from his papers, but composed by a Jacobite who did not even take the trouble to look at a map of the seat of war.

Digitized by Google

humane age almost incredible. One of the Scotch Privy Councillors told him that he was a confounded villain. "I am at peace with God," answered Rumbold, calmly; "how then can I be confounded?"

He was hastily tried, convicted, and sentenced to be hanged and quartered within a few hours, near the City Cross in the High Street. Though unable to stand without the support of two men, he maintained his fortitude to the last, and under the gibbet raised his feeble voice against Popery and tyranny with such vehemence that the officers ordered the drums to strike up, lest the people should hear him. He was a friend, he said, to limited monarchy. But he never would believe that Providence had sent a few men into the world ready booted and spurred to ride, and millions ready saddled and bridled to be ridden. "I desire," he cried, "to bless and magnify God's holy name for this, that I stand here, not for any wrong that I have done, but for adhering to his cause in an evil day. If every hair of my head were a man, in this quarrel I would venture them all."

Both at his trial and at his execution he spoke of assassination with the abhorrence which became a good Christian and a brave soldier. He had never, he protested, on the faith of a dying man, harboured the thought of committing such villany. But he frankly owned that, in conversation with his fellow conspirators, he had mentioned his own house as a place where Charles and James might with advantage be attacked, and that much had been said on the subject, though nothing had been determined. It may at first sight seem that this acknowledgment is inconsistent with his declaration that he had always regarded assassination with horror. But the truth appears to be that he was imposed upon by a distinction which deluded many of his contemporaries. Nothing would have induced him to put poison into the food of the two princes, or to poniard them in

Digitized by Google

their sleep. But to make an unexpected onset on the troop of Life Guards which surrounded the royal coach, to exchange sword cuts and pistol shots, and to take the chance of slaying or of being slain, was, in his view, a lawful military operation. Ambuscades and surprises were among the ordinary incidents of war. Every old soldier, Cavalier or Roundhead, had been engaged in such enterprises. If in the skirmish the King should fall, he would fall by fair fighting and not by murder. Precisely the same reasoning was employed, after the Revolution, by James himself and by some of his most devoted followers, to justify a wicked attempt on the life of William the Third. A band of Jacobites was commissioned to attack the Prince of Orange in his winter quarters. The meaning latent under this specious phrase was that the Prince's throat was to be cut as he went in his coach from Richmond to Kensington. It may seem strange that such fallacies, the dregs of the Jesuitical casuistry, should have had power to seduce men of heroic spirit, both Whigs and Tories, into a crime on which divine and human laws have justly set a peculiar note of infamy. But no sophism is too gross to delude minds distempered by party spirit.*

Argyle, who survived Rumbold a few hours, left a dying testimony to the virtues of the gallant English-

* Wodrow, III. ix. 10.; Western Martyrology; Burnet, i. 633.; Fox's History, Appendix iv. I can find no way, except that indicated in the text, of reconciling Rumbold's denial that he had ever admitted into his mind the thought of assassination with his confession that he had himself mentioned his own house as a convenient place for an attack on the royal brothers. The distinction which I suppose him to have taken was certainly taken by another Rye House conspirator, who was, like him, an old soldier of the Commonwealth, Captain Walcot. On Walcot's trial, West, the witness for the crown, said, "Captain, you did agree to be one of those that were to fight the Guards." "What, then, was the reason," asked Chief Justice Pemberton, "that he would not kill the King?" "He said," answered West, "that it was a base thing to kill a naked man, and he would not do it."

Digitized by Google

man. "Poor Rumbold was a great support to me, and a brave man, and died Christianly."*

Death of Ayloffe.

Ayloffe showed as much contempt of death as either Argyle or Rumbold: but his end did not, like theirs, edify pious minds. Though political sympathy had drawn him towards the Puritans, he had no religious sympathy with them, and was indeed regarded by them as little better than an atheist. He belonged to that section of the Whigs which sought for models rather among the patriots of Greece and Rome than among the prophets and judges of Israel. He was taken prisoner, and carried to Glasgow. There he attempted to destroy himself with a small penknife: but though he gave himself several wounds, none of them proved mortal, and he had strength enough left to bear a journey to London. He was brought before the Privy Council, and interrogated by the King, but had too much elevation of mind to save himself by informing against others. A story was current among the Whigs that the King said, "You had better be frank with me, Mr. Ayloffe. You know that it is in my power to pardon you." Then, it was rumoured, the captive broke his sullen silence, and answered, "It may be in your power; but it is not in your nature." He was executed under his old outlawry before the gate of the Temple, and died with stoical composure.†

Devastation of Argyleshire.

In the meantime the vengeance of the conquerors was mercilessly wreaked on the people of Argyleshire. Many of the Campbells were hanged by Athol without a trial; and he was with difficulty restrained by the Privy Council from taking more lives. The country to the extent of thirty miles

* Wodrow, III. ix. 9.

† Wade's narrative, Harl. MS. 6845.; Burnet, i. 634.; Van Citters' Despatch of $\frac{\text{Oct. 30.}}{\text{Nov. 9.}}$ 1685; Luttrell's Diary of the same date.

Digitized by Google

round Inverary was wasted. Houses were burned: the stones of mills were broken to pieces: fruit trees were cut down, and the very roots seared with fire. The nets and fishing boats, the sole means by which many inhabitants of the coast subsisted, were destroyed. More than three hundred rebels and malecontents were transported to the colonies. Many of them were also sentenced to mutilation. On a single day the hangman of Edinburgh cut off the ears of thirty five prisoners. Several women were sent across the Atlantic after being first branded in the cheek with a hot iron. It was even in contemplation to obtain an act of Parliament proscribing the name of Campbell, as the name of Macgregor had been proscribed eighty years before.*

Argyle's expedition appears to have produced little sensation in the south of the island. The tidings of his landing reached London just before the English Parliament met. The King mentioned the news from the throne; and the Houses assured him that they would stand by him against every enemy. Nothing more was required of them. Over Scotland they had no authority; and a war of which the theatre was so distant, and of which the event might, almost from the first, be easily foreseen, excited only a languid interest in London.

Ineffectual attempts to prevent Monmouth from leaving Holland.

But, a week before the final dispersion of Argyle's army, England was agitated by the news that a more formidable invader had landed on her own shores. It had been agreed among the refugees that Monmouth should sail from Holland six days after the departure of the Scots. He had deferred his expedition a short time, probably in the hope that most of the troops in the

* Wodrow, III. ix. 4. and III. ix. 10. Wodrow gives from the Acts of Council the names of all the prisoners who were transported, mutilated, or branded.

Digitized by Google

south of the island would be moved to the north as soon as war broke out in the Highlands, and that he should find no force ready to oppose him. When at length he was desirous to proceed, the wind had become adverse and violent.

While his small fleet lay tossing in the Texel, a contest was going on among the Dutch authorities. The States General and the Prince of Orange were on one side, the Town Council and Admiralty of Amsterdam on the other.

Skelton had delivered to the States General a list of the refugees whose residence in the United Provinces caused uneasiness to his master. The States General, anxious to grant every reasonable request which James could make, sent copies of the list to the provincial authorities. The provincial authorities sent copies to the municipal authorities. The magistrates of all the towns were directed to take such measures as might prevent the proscribed Whigs from molesting the English government. In general those directions were obeyed. At Rotterdam in particular, where the influence of William was all powerful, such activity was shown as called forth warm acknowledgments from James. But Amsterdam was the chief seat of the emigrants; and the governing body of Amsterdam would see nothing, hear nothing, know of nothing. The High Bailiff of the city, who was himself in daily communication with Ferguson, reported to the Hague that he did not know where to find a single one of the refugees; and with this excuse the federal government was forced to be content. The truth was that the English exiles were as well known at Amsterdam, and as much stared at in the streets, as if they had been Chinese.*

* Skelton's letter is dated the 7th of May 1686. It will be found, together with a letter of the Schout or High Bailiff of Amsterdam, in a little volume published a few months later, and entitled, "Histoire des Evènemens Tragiques d'Angleterre."

Digitized by Google

A few days later, Skelton received orders from his court to request that, in consequence of the dangers which threatened his master's throne, the three Scotch regiments in the service of the United Provinces might be sent to Great Britain without delay. He applied to the Prince of Orange; and the prince undertook to manage the matter, but predicted that Amsterdam would raise some difficulty. The prediction proved correct. The deputies of Amsterdam refused to consent, and succeeded in causing some delay. But the question was not one of those on which, by the constitution of the republic, a single city could prevent the wish of the majority from being carried into effect. The influence of William prevailed; and the troops were embarked with great expedition.*

Skelton was at the same time exerting himself, not indeed very judiciously or temperately, to stop the ships which the English refugees had fitted out. He expostulated in warm terms with the Admiralty of Amsterdam. The negligence of that board, he said, had already enabled one band of rebels to invade Britain. For a second error of the same kind

The documents inserted in that work are, as far as I have examined them, given exactly from the Dutch archives, except that Skelton's French, which was not the purest, is slightly corrected. See also Grey's Narrative.

Goodenough, on his examination after the battle of Sedgemoor, said, "The Schout of Amsterdam was a particular friend to this last design." Lansdowne MS. 1152.

It is not worth while to refute those writers who represent the Prince of Orange as an accomplice in Monmouth's enterprise. The circumstance on which they chiefly rely is that the authorities of Amsterdam took no effectual steps for preventing the expedition from sailing. This circumstance is in truth the strongest proof that the expedition was not favoured by William. No person, not profoundly ignorant of the institutions and politics of Holland, would hold the Stadtholder answerable for the proceedings of the heads of the Loevestein party.

* Avaux Neg. June $\frac{7}{17}$. $\frac{9}{19}$. $\frac{14}{24}$. 1685; Letter of the Prince of Orange to Lord Rochester, June 9. 1685.

Digitized by Google

there could be no excuse. He peremptorily demanded that a large vessel, named the Helderenbergh, might be detained. It was pretended that this vessel was bound for the Canaries. But, in truth, she had been freighted by Monmouth, carried twenty six guns, and was loaded with arms and ammunition. The Admiralty of Amsterdam replied that the liberty of trade and navigation was not to be restrained for light reasons, and that the Helderenbergh could not be stopped without an order from the States General. Skelton, whose uniform practice seems to have been to begin at the wrong end, now had recourse to the States General. The States General gave the necessary orders. Then the Admiralty of Amsterdam pretended that there was not a sufficient naval force in the Texel to seize so large a ship as the Helderenbergh, and suffered Monmouth to sail unmolested.*

The weather was bad: the voyage was long; and several English men of war were cruising in the Channel. But Monmouth escaped both the sea and the enemy. As he passed by the cliffs of Dorsetshire, it was thought desirable to send a boat to the beach with one of the refugees named Thomas Dare. This man, though of low mind and manners, had great influence at Taunton. He was directed to hasten thither across the country, and to apprise his friends that Monmouth would soon be on English ground.†

His arrival at Lyme.

On the morning of the eleventh of June the Helderenbergh, accompanied by two smaller vessels, appeared off the port of Lyme. That town is a small knot of steep and narrow alleys, lying on a coast wild, rocky, and beaten by a stormy

* Van Citters, June $\frac{8}{18}$., June $\frac{12}{22}$. 1685. The correspondence of Skelton with the States General and with the Admiralty of Amsterdam is in the archives at the Hague. Some pieces will be found in the Evènemens Tragiques d'Angleterre. See also Burnet, i. 640.

† Wade's Confession in the Hardwicke Papers; Harl. MS. 6845.

Digitized by Google

sea. The place was then chiefly remarkable for a pier which, in the days of the Plantagenets, had been constructed of stones, unhewn and uncemented. This ancient work, known by the name of the Cob, enclosed the only haven where, in a space of many miles, the fishermen could take refuge from the tempests of the Channel.

The appearance of the three ships, foreign built and without colours, perplexed the inhabitants of Lyme; and the uneasiness increased when it was found that the Customhouse officers, who had gone on board according to usage, did not return. The town's people repaired to the cliffs, and gazed long and anxiously, but could find no solution of the mystery. At length seven boats put off from the largest of the strange vessels, and rowed to the shore. From these boats landed about eighty men, well armed and appointed. Among them were Monmouth, Grey, Fletcher, Ferguson, Wade, and Anthony Buyse, an officer who had been in the service of the Elector of Brandenburg.*

Monmouth commanded silence, kneeled down on the shore, thanked God for having preserved the friends of liberty and pure religion from the perils of the sea, and implored the divine blessing on what was yet to be done by land. He then drew his sword and led his men over the cliffs into the town.

As soon as it was known under what leader and for what purpose the expedition came, the enthusiasm of the populace burst through all restraints. The little town was in an uproar with men running to and fro, and shouting "A Monmouth! a Monmouth! the Protestant religion!" Meanwhile the ensign of the adventurers, a blue flag, was set up in the market place. The military stores were deposited in the

* See Buyse's evidence against Monmouth and Fletcher in the Collection of State Trials.

Digitized by Google

town hall; and a Declaration setting forth the objects of the expedition was read from the Cross.*

His declaration.

This Declaration, the masterpiece of Ferguson's genius, was not a grave manifesto such as ought to be put forth by a leader drawing the sword for a great public cause, but a libel of the lowest class, both in sentiment and language.† It contained undoubtedly many just charges against the government. But these charges were set forth in the prolix and inflated style of a bad pamphlet; and the paper contained other charges of which the whole disgrace falls on those who made them. The Duke of York, it was positively affirmed, had burned down London, had strangled Godfrey, had cut the throat of Essex, and had poisoned the late King. On account of those villainous and unnatural crimes, but chiefly of that execrable fact, the late horrible and barbarous parricide,—such was the copiousness and such the felicity of Ferguson's diction,—James was declared a mortal and bloody enemy, a tyrant, a murderer, and an usurper. No treaty should be made with him. The sword should not be sheathed till he had been brought to condign punishment as a traitor. The government should be settled on principles favourable to liberty. All Protestant sects should be tolerated. The forfeited charters should be restored. Parliaments should be held annually, and should no longer be prorogued or dissolved by royal caprice. The only standing force should be the militia: the militia should be commanded by the Sheriffs; and the Sheriffs should be chosen by the freeholders. Finally Monmouth declared that he could prove himself to have been born in lawful wedlock, and to be,

* Journals of the House of Commons, June 13. 1685; Harl. MS. 6845.; Lansdowne MS. 1152.

† Burnet, i. 641.; Goodenough's confession in the Lansdowne MS. 1152. Copies of the Declaration, as originally printed, are very rare; but there is one in the British Museum.

Digitized by Google

by right of blood, King of England, but that, for the present, he waived his claims, that he would leave them to the judgment of a free Parliament, and that, in the meantime, he desired to be considered only as the Captain General of the English Protestants who were in arms against tyranny and Popery.

Disgraceful as this manifesto was to those who put it forth, it was not unskilfully framed for the purpose of stimulating the passions of the vulgar. In the West the effect was great. The gentry and clergy of that part of England were indeed, with few exceptions, Tories. But the yeomen, the traders of the towns, the peasants, and the artisans were generally animated by the old Roundhead spirit. Many of them were Dissenters, and had been goaded by petty persecution into a temper fit for desperate enterprise. The great mass of the population abhorred Popery and adored Monmouth. He was no stranger to them. His progress through Somersetshire and Devonshire in the summer of 1680 was still fresh in the memory of all men. He was on that occasion sumptuously entertained by Thomas Thynne at Longleat Hall, then, and perhaps still, the most magnificent country house in England. From Longleat to Exeter the hedges were lined with shouting spectators. The roads were strewn with boughs and flowers. The multitude, in their eagerness to see and touch their favourite, broke down the palings of parks, and besieged the mansions where he was feasted. When he reached Chard his escort consisted of five thousand horsemen. At Exeter all Devonshire had been gathered together to welcome him. One striking part of the show was a company of nine hundred young men who, clad in a white uniform, marched before him into the city.* The

His popularity in the West of England.

* Historical Account of the Life and magnanimous Actions of the most illustrious Protestant Prince James, Duke of Monmouth, 1683.

Digitized by Google

turn of fortune which had alienated the gentry from his cause had produced no effect on the common people. To them he was still the good Duke, the Protestant Duke, the rightful heir whom a vile conspiracy kept out of his own. They came to his standard in crowds. All the clerks whom he could employ were too few to take down the names of the recruits. Before he had been twenty four hours on English ground he was at the head of fifteen hundred men. Dare arrived from Taunton with forty horsemen of no very martial appearance, and brought encouraging intelligence as to the state of public feeling in Somersetshire. As yet all seemed to promise well.*

But a force was collecting at Bridport to oppose the insurgents. On the thirteenth of June the red regiment of Dorsetshire militia came pouring into that town. The Somersetshire, or yellow regiment, of which Sir William Portman, a Tory gentleman of great note, was Colonel, was expected to arrive on the following day.† The Duke determined to strike an immediate blow. A detachment of his troops was preparing to march to Bridport when a disastrous event threw the whole camp into confusion.

Fletcher of Saltoun had been appointed to command the cavalry under Grey. Fletcher was ill mounted; and indeed there were few chargers in the camp which had not been taken from the plough. When he was ordered to Bridport, he thought that the exigency of the case warranted him in borrowing, without asking permission, a fine horse belonging to Dare. Dare resented this liberty, and assailed Fletcher with gross abuse. Fletcher kept his temper better than any one who knew him expected. At last Dare, presuming on the patience with which his

* Wade's Confession, Hardwicke Papers; Axe Papers; Harl. MS. 6845.

† Harl. MS. 6845.

Digitized by Google

insolence was endured, ventured to shake a switch at the high born and high spirited Scot. Fletcher's blood boiled. He drew a pistol and shot Dare dead. Such sudden and violent revenge would not have been thought strange in Scotland, where the law had always been weak, where he who did not right himself by the strong hand was not likely to be righted at all, and where, consequently, human life was held almost as cheap as in the worst governed provinces of Italy. But the people of the southern part of the island were not accustomed to see deadly weapons used and blood spilled on account of a rude word or gesture, except in duel between gentlemen with equal arms. There was a general cry for vengeance on the foreigner who had murdered an Englishman. Monmouth could not resist the clamour. Fletcher, who, when his first burst of rage had spent itself, was overwhelmed with remorse and sorrow, took refuge on board of the Helderenbergh, escaped to the Continent, and repaired to Hungary, where he fought bravely against the common enemy of Christendom.*

Encounter of the rebels with the militia at Bridport.

Situated as the insurgents were, the loss of a man of parts and energy was not easily to be repaired. Early on the morning of the following day, the fourteenth of June, Grey, accompanied by Wade, marched with about five hundred men to attack Bridport. A confused and indecisive action took place, such as was to be expected when two bands of ploughmen, officered by country gentlemen and barristers, were opposed to each other. For a time Monmouth's men drove the militia before them. Then the militia made a stand, and Monmouth's men retreated in some confusion. Grey and his cavalry never stopped till they were

* Buyse's evidence in the Collection of State Trials; Burnet, i. 642.; Ferguson's MS. quoted by Eachard.

Digitized by Google

safe at Lyme again: but Wade rallied the infantry, and brought them off in good order.*

There was a violent outcry against Grey; and some of the adventurers pressed Monmouth to take a severe course. Monmouth, however, would not listen to this advice. His lenity has been attributed by some writers to his good nature, which undoubtedly often amounted to weakness. Others have supposed that he was unwilling to deal harshly with the only peer who served in his army. It is probable, however, that the Duke, who, though not a general of the highest order, understood war very much better than the preachers and lawyers who were always obtruding their advice on him, made allowances which people altogether inexpert in military affairs never thought of making. In justice to a man who has had few defenders, it must be observed that the task, which, throughout this campaign, was assigned to Grey, was one which, if he had been the boldest and most skilful of soldiers, he could scarcely have performed in such a manner as to gain credit. He was at the head of the cavalry. It is notorious that a horse soldier requires a longer training than a foot soldier, and that the war horse requires a longer training than his rider. Something may be done with a raw infantry which has enthusiasm and animal courage: but nothing can be more helpless than a raw cavalry, consisting of yeomen and tradesmen mounted on cart horses and post horses; and such was the cavalry which Grey commanded. The wonder is, not that his men did not stand fire with resolution, not that they did not use their weapons with vigour, but that they were able to keep their seats.

Still recruits came in by hundreds. Arming and drilling went on all day. Meantime the news of the insurrection had spread fast and wide. On the

* London Gazette, June 18. 1685; Wade's Confession, Hardwicke Papers.

Digitized by Google

evening on which the Duke landed, Gregory Alford, Mayor of Lyme, a zealous Tory, and a bitter persecutor of Nonconformists, sent off his servants to give the alarm to the gentry of Somersetshire and Dorsetshire, and himself took horse for the West. Late at night he stopped at Honiton, and thence despatched a few hurried lines to London with the ill tidings.* He then pushed on to Exeter, where he found Christopher Monk, Duke of Albemarle. This nobleman, the son and heir of George Monk, the restorer of the Stuarts, was Lord Lieutenant of Devonshire, and was then holding a muster of militia. Four thousand men of the trainbands were actually assembled under his command. He seems to have thought that, with this force, he should be able at once to crush the rebellion. He therefore marched towards Lyme.

But when, on the afternoon of Monday the fifteenth of June, he reached Axminster, he found the insurgents drawn up there to encounter him. They presented a resolute front. Four field pieces were pointed against the royal troops. The thick hedges, which on each side overhung the narrow lanes, were lined with musketeers. Albemarle, however, was less alarmed by the preparations of the enemy than by the spirit which appeared in his own ranks. Such was Monmouth's popularity among the common people of Devonshire that, if once the trainbands had caught sight of his well known face and figure, they would probably have gone over to him in a body.

Encounter of the rebels with the militia at Axminster.

Albemarle, therefore, though he had a great superiority of force, thought it advisable to retreat. The retreat soon became a rout. The whole country was strewn with the arms and uniforms which the fugitives had thrown away; and, had Monmouth urged the pursuit with vigour, he would probably have

* Lords' Journals, June 13. 1685.

Digitized by Google

taken Exeter without a blow. But he was satisfied with the advantage which he had gained, and thought it desirable that his recruits should be better trained before they were employed in any hazardous service. He therefore marched towards Taunton, where he arrived on the eighteenth of June, exactly a week after his landing.*

News of the rebellion carried to London.

The Court and the Parliament had been greatly moved by the news from the West. At five in the morning of Saturday the thirteenth of June, the King had received the letter which the Mayor of Lyme had despatched from Honiton. The Privy Council was instantly called together. Orders were given that the strength of every company of infantry and of every troop of cavalry should be increased. Commissions were issued for the levying of new regiments. Alford's communication was laid before the Lords; and its substance was communicated to the Commons by a message. The Commons examined the couriers who had arrived from the West, and instantly ordered a bill to be brought in for attainting Monmouth of high treason. Addresses were voted assuring the King that both his peers and his people were determined to stand by him with life and fortune against all his enemies. At the next meeting of the Houses they ordered the declaration of the rebels to be burned by the hangman, and passed the bill of attainder through all its stages. That bill received the royal assent on the same day; and a reward of five thousand pounds was promised for the apprehension of Monmouth.†

Loyalty of the Parliament.

The fact that Monmouth was in arms against the

* Wade's Confession; Ferguson MS.; Axe Papers, Harl. MS. 6845.; Oldmixon, 701, 702. Oldmixon, who was then a boy, lived very near the scene of these events.

† London Gazette, June 18. 1685; Lords' and Commons' Journals, June 13. and 15.; Dutch Despatch, June $\frac{18}{28}$.

Digitized by Google

government was so notorious that the bill of attainder became a law with only a faint show of opposition from one or two peers, and has seldom been severely censured even by Whig historians. Yet, when we consider how important it is that legislative and judicial functions should be kept distinct, how important it is that common fame, however strong and general, should not be received as a legal proof of guilt, how important it is to maintain the rule that no man shall be condemned to death without an opportunity of defending himself, and how easily and speedily breaches in great principles, when once made, are widened, we shall probably be disposed to think that the course taken by the Parliament was open to some objection. Neither House had before it anything which even so corrupt a judge as Jeffreys could have directed a jury to consider as proof of Monmouth's crime. The messengers examined by the Commons were not on oath, and might therefore have related mere fictions without incurring the penalties of perjury. The Lords, who might have administered an oath, appear not to have examined any witness, and to have had no evidence before them except the letter of the Mayor of Lyme, which, in the eye of the law, was no evidence at all. Extreme danger, it is true, justifies extreme remedies. But the Act of Attainder was a remedy which could not operate till all danger was over, and which would become superfluous at the very moment at which it ceased to be null. While Monmouth was in arms it was impossible to execute him. If he should be vanquished and taken, there would be no hazard and no difficulty in trying him. It was afterwards remembered as a curious circumstance that, among the zealous Tories who went up with the bill from the House of Commons to the bar of the Lords, was Sir John Fenwick, member for Northumberland. This gentleman, a few years later, had occasion to

Digitized by Google

reconsider the whole subject, and then came to the conclusion that acts of attainder are altogether unjustifiable.*

The Parliament gave other proofs of loyalty in this hour of peril. The Commons authorised the King to raise an extraordinary sum of four hundred thousand pounds for his present necessities, and, that he might have no difficulty in finding the money, proceeded to devise new imposts. The scheme of taxing houses lately built in the capital was revived and strenuously supported by the country gentlemen. It was resolved not only that such houses should be taxed, but that a bill should be brought in prohibiting the laying of any new foundations within the bills of mortality. The resolution, however, was not carried into effect. Powerful men who had land in the suburbs, and who hoped to see new streets and squares rise on their estates, exerted all their influence against the project. It was found that to adjust the details would be a work of time; and the King's wants were so pressing that he thought it necessary to quicken the movements of the House by a gentle exhortation to speed. The plan of taxing buildings was therefore relinquished; and new duties were imposed for a term of five years on foreign silks, linens, and spirits.†

The Tories of the Lower House proceeded to introduce what they called a bill for the preservation of the King's person and government. They proposed that it should be high treason to say that Monmouth was legitimate, to utter any words tending to bring the person or government of the sovereign into hatred or contempt, or to make any motion in Parliament for changing the order of succession. Some of these provisions excited general disgust and

* Oldmixon is wrong in saying that Fenwick carried up the bill. It was carried up, as appears from the Journals, by Lord Ancram. See Delamere's Observations on the Attainder of the late Duke of Monmouth.

† Commons' Journals of June 17, 18, and 19. 1685; Reresby's Memoirs.

Digitized by Google

alarm. The Whigs, few and weak as they were, attempted to rally, and found themselves reinforced by a considerable number of moderate and sensible Cavaliers. Words, it was said, may easily be misunderstood by a dull man. They may easily be misconstrued by a knave. What was spoken metaphorically may be apprehended literally. What was spoken ludicrously may be apprehended seriously. A particle, a tense, a mood, an emphasis, may make the whole difference between guilt and innocence. The Saviour of mankind himself, in whose blameless life malice could find no act to impeach, had been called in question for words spoken. False witnesses had suppressed a syllable which would have made it clear that those words were figurative, and had thus furnished the Sanhedrim with a pretext under which the foulest of all judicial murders had been perpetrated. With such an example on record, who could affirm that, if mere talk were made a substantive treason, the most loyal subject would be safe? These arguments produced so great an effect that in the committee amendments were introduced which greatly mitigated the severity of the bill. But the clause which made it high treason in a member of Parliament to propose the exclusion of a prince of the blood seems to have raised no debate, and was retained. That clause was indeed altogether unimportant, except as a proof of the ignorance and inexperience of the hotheaded Royalists who thronged the House of Commons. Had they learned the first rudiments of legislation, they would have known that the enactment to which they attached so much value would be superfluous while the Parliament was disposed to maintain the order of succession, and would be repealed as soon as there was a Parliament bent on changing the order of succession.*

* Commons' Journals, June 19. 29. 1685; Lord Lonsdale's Memoirs, 8, 9.; Burnet, i. 639. The bill, as amended by the

Digitized by Google

The bill, as amended, was passed and carried up to the Lords, but did not become law. The King had obtained from the Parliament all the pecuniary assistance that he could expect; and he conceived that, while rebellion was actually raging, the loyal nobility and gentry would be of more use in their counties than at Westminster. He therefore hurried their deliberations to a close, and, on the second of July, dismissed them. On the same day the royal assent was given to a law reviving that censorship of the press which had terminated in 1679. This object was effected by a few words at the end of a miscellaneous statute which continued several expiring acts. The courtiers did not think that they had gained a triumph. The Whigs did not utter a murmur. Neither in the Lords nor in the Commons was there any division, or even, as far as can now be learned, any debate on a question which would, in our age, convulse the whole frame of society. In truth, the change was slight and almost imperceptible; for, since the detection of the Rye House plot, the liberty of unlicensed printing had existed only in name. During many months scarcely one Whig pamphlet had been published except by stealth; and by stealth such pamphlets might be published still.*

The Houses then rose. They were not prorogued, but only adjourned, in order that, when they should reassemble, they might take up their business in the exact state in which they had left it.†

Reception of Monmouth at Taunton.

While the Parliament was devising sharp laws against Monmouth and his partisans, he found at Taunton a reception which might well encourage him to hope that his enter-

committee, will be found in Mr. Fox's historical work, Appendix iii. If Burnet's account be correct, the offences, which, by the amended bill, were made punishable only with civil incapacities, were, by the original bill, made capital.

* 1 Jac. II. c. 17.; Lords' Journals, July 2. 1685.

† Lords' and Commons' Journals, July 2. 1685.

Digitized by Google

prise would have a prosperous issue. Taunton, like most other towns in the south of England, was, in that age, more important than at present. Those towns have not indeed declined. On the contrary, they are, with very few exceptions, larger and richer, better built and better peopled, than in the seventeenth century. But, though they have positively advanced, they have relatively gone back. They have been far outstripped in wealth and population by the great manufacturing and commercial cities of the north, cities which, in the time of the Stuarts, were but beginning to be known as seats of industry. When Monmouth marched into Taunton it was an eminently prosperous place. Its markets were plentifully supplied. It was a celebrated seat of the woollen manufacture. The people boasted that they lived in a land flowing with milk and honey. Nor was this language held only by partial natives; for every stranger who climbed the graceful tower of Saint Mary Magdalene owned that he saw beneath him the most fertile of English valleys. It was a country rich with orchards and green pastures, among which were scattered, in gay abundance, manor houses, cottages, and village spires. The townsmen had long leaned towards Presbyterian divinity and Whig politics. In the great civil war Taunton had, through all vicissitudes, adhered to the Parliament, had been twice closely besieged by Goring, and had been twice defended with heroic valour by Robert Blake, afterwards the renowned Admiral of the Commonwealth. Whole streets had been burned down by the mortars and grenades of the Cavaliers. Food had been so scarce that the resolute governor had announced his intention of putting the garrison on rations of horse flesh. But the spirit of the town had never been subdued either by fire or by hunger.*

* Savage's edition of Toulmin's History of Taunton.

Digitized by Google

The Restoration had produced no effect on the temper of the Taunton men. They had still continued to celebrate the anniversary of the happy day on which the siege laid to their town by the royal army had been raised; and their stubborn attachment to the old cause had excited so much fear and resentment at Whitehall that, by a royal order, their moat had been filled up, and their wall demolished to the foundation.* The puritanical spirit had been kept up to the height among them by the precepts and example of one of the most celebrated of the dissenting clergy, Joseph Alleine. Alleine was the author of a tract, entitled, An Alarm to the Unconverted, which is still popular both in England and in America. From the gaol to which he was consigned by the victorious Cavaliers, he addressed to his loving friends at Taunton many epistles breathing the spirit of a truly heroic piety. His frame soon sank under the effects of study, toil, and persecution: but his memory was long cherished with exceeding love and reverence by those whom he had exhorted and catechised.†

The children of the men who, forty years before, had manned the ramparts of Taunton against the Royalists, now welcomed Monmouth with transports of joy and affection. Every door and window was adorned with wreaths of flowers. No man appeared in the streets without wearing in his hat a green bough, the badge of the popular cause. Damsels of the best families in the town wove colours for the insurgents. One flag in particular was embroidered gorgeously with emblems of royal dignity, and was offered to Monmouth by a train of young girls. He received the gift with the winning courtesy which

* Sprat's True Account; Toulmin's History of Taunton.

† Life and Death of Joseph Alleine, 1672; Nonconformists' Memorial.

Digitized by Google

distinguished him. The lady who headed the procession presented him also with a small Bible of great price. He took it with a show of reverence. "I come," he said, "to defend the truths contained in this book, and to seal them, if it must be so, with my blood." *

But, while Monmouth enjoyed the applause of the multitude, he could not but perceive, with concern and apprehension, that the higher classes were, with scarcely an exception, hostile to his undertaking, and that no rising had taken place except in the counties where he had himself appeared. He had been assured by agents, who professed to have derived their information from Wildman, that the whole Whig aristocracy was eager to take arms. Nevertheless more than a week had now elapsed since the blue standard had been set up at Lyme. Day labourers, small farmers, shopkeepers, apprentices, dissenting preachers, had flocked to the rebel camp: but not a single peer, baronet, or knight, not a single member of the House of Commons, and scarcely any esquire of sufficient note to have ever been in the commission of the peace, had joined the invaders. Ferguson, who, ever since the death of Charles, had been Monmouth's evil angel, had a suggestion ready. The Duke had put himself into a false position by declining the royal title. Had he declared himself sovereign of England, his cause would have worn a show of legality. At present it was impossible to reconcile his Declaration with the principles of the constitution. It was clear that either Monmouth or his uncle was rightful King. Monmouth did not venture to pronounce himself the rightful King, and yet denied that his uncle was so. Those who fought for James fought for the only person who ventured to claim the throne, and were therefore clearly in their duty, according to

* Harl. MS. 7006.; Oldmixon, 702.; Eachard, iii. 763.

Digitized by Google

the laws of the realm. Those who fought for Monmouth fought for some unknown polity, which was to be set up by a convention not yet in existence. None could wonder that men of high rank and ample fortune stood aloof from an enterprise which threatened with destruction that system in the permanence of which they were deeply interested. If the Duke would assert his legitimacy and assume the crown, he would at once remove this objection. The question would cease to be a question between the old constitution and a new constitution. It would be merely a question of hereditary right between two princes.

He takes the title of King.

On such grounds as these Ferguson, almost immediately after the landing, had earnestly pressed the Duke to proclaim himself King; and Grey had seconded Ferguson. Monmouth had been very willing to take this advice; but Wade and other republicans had been refractory; and their chief, with his usual pliability, had yielded to their arguments. At Taunton the subject was revived. Monmouth talked in private with the dissentients, assured them that he saw no other way of obtaining the support of any portion of the aristocracy, and succeeded in extorting their reluctant consent. On the morning of the twentieth of June he was proclaimed in the market place of Taunton. His followers repeated his new title with affectionate delight. But, as some confusion might have arisen if he had been called King James the Second, they commonly used the strange appellation of King Monmouth: and by this name their unhappy favourite was often mentioned in the western counties, within the memory of persons still living.*

* Wade's Confession; Goodenough's Confession, Harl. MS. 1152.; Oldmixon, 702. Ferguson's denial is quite undeserving of credit. A copy of the proclamation is in the Harl. MS. 7006.

Digitized by Google

Within twenty four hours after he had assumed the regal title, he put forth several proclamations headed with his sign manual. By one of these he set a price on the head of his rival. Another declared the Parliament then sitting at Westminster an unlawful assembly, and commanded the members to disperse. A third forbade the people to pay taxes to the usurper. A fourth pronounced Albemarle a traitor.*

Albemarle transmitted these proclamations to London merely as specimens of folly and impertinence. They produced no effect, except wonder and contempt; nor had Monmouth any reason to think that the assumption of royalty had improved his position. Only a week had elapsed since he had solemnly bound himself not to take the crown till a free Parliament should have acknowledged his rights. By breaking that engagement he had incurred the imputation of levity, if not of perfidy. The class which he had hoped to conciliate still stood aloof. The reasons which prevented the great Whig lords and gentlemen from recognising him as their King were at least as strong as those which had prevented them from rallying round him as their Captain General. They disliked indeed the person, the religion, and the politics of James. But James was no longer young. His eldest daughter was justly popular. She was attached to the reformed faith. She was married to a prince who was the hereditary chief of the Protestants of the Continent, to a prince who had been bred in a republic, and whose sentiments were supposed to be such as became a constitutional King. Was it wise to incur the horrors of civil war, for the mere chance of being able to effect immediately what

* Copies of the last three proclamations are in the British Museum; Harl. MS. 7006. The first I have never seen; but it is mentioned by Wade.

Digitized by Google

nature would, without bloodshed, without any violation of law, effect, in all probability, before many years should have expired? Perhaps there might be reasons for pulling down James. But what reason could be given for setting up Monmouth? To exclude a prince from the throne on account of unfitness was a course agreeable to Whig principles. But on no principle could it be proper to exclude rightful heirs, who were admitted to be, not only blameless, but eminently qualified for the highest public trust. That Monmouth was legitimate, nay, that he thought himself legitimate, intelligent men could not believe. He was therefore not merely an usurper, but an usurper of the worst sort, an impostor. If he made out any semblance of a case, he could do so only by means of forgery and perjury. All honest and sensible persons were unwilling to see a fraud which, if practised to obtain an estate, would have been punished with the scourge and the pillory, rewarded with the English crown. To the old nobility of the realm it seemed insupportable that the bastard of Lucy Walters should be set up high above the lawful descendants of the Fitzalans and De Veres. Those who were capable of looking forward must have seen that, if Monmouth should succeed in overpowering the existing government, there would still remain a war between him and the House of Orange, a war which might last longer and produce more misery than the war of the Roses, a war which might probably break up the Protestants of Europe into hostile parties, might arm England and Holland against each other, and might make both those countries an easy prey to France. The opinion, therefore, of almost all the leading Whigs seems to have been that Monmouth's enterprise could not fail to end in some great disaster to the nation, but that, on the whole, his defeat would be a less disaster than his victory.

Digitized by Google

It was not only by the inaction of the Whig aristocracy that the invaders were disappointed. The wealth and power of London had sufficed in the preceding generation, and might again suffice, to turn the scale in a civil conflict. The Londoners had formerly given many proofs of their hatred of Popery and of their affection for the Protestant Duke. He had too readily believed that, as soon as he landed, there would be a rising in the capital. But, though advices came down to him that many thousands of the citizens had been enrolled as volunteers for the good cause, nothing was done. The plain truth was that the agitators who had urged him to invade England, who had promised to rise on the first signal, and who had perhaps imagined, while the danger was remote, that they should have the courage to keep their promise, lost heart when the critical time drew near. Wildman's fright was such that he seemed to have lost his understanding. The craven Danvers at first excused his inaction by saying that he would not take up arms till Monmouth was proclaimed King, and, when Monmouth had been proclaimed King, turned round and declared that good republicans were absolved from all engagements to a leader who had so shamefully broken faith. In every age the vilest specimens of human nature are to be found among demagogues.*

On the day following that on which Monmouth had assumed the regal title he marched from Taunton to Bridgewater. His own spirits, it was remarked, were not high. The acclamations of the devoted thousands who surrounded him wherever he turned could not dispel the gloom which sate on his brow. Those who had seen him during his progress through Somersetshire five years before could not now observe without pity the traces of distress and anxiety

* Grey's Narrative; Ferguson's MS., Eachard, iii. 754.

Digitized by Google

on those soft and pleasing features which had won so many hearts.*

Ferguson was in a very different temper. With this man's knavery was strangely mingled an eccentric vanity which resembled madness. The thought that he had raised a rebellion and bestowed a crown had turned his head. He swaggered about, brandishing his naked sword, and crying to the crowd of spectators who had assembled to see the army march out of Taunton, "Look at me! You have heard of me. I am Ferguson, the famous Ferguson, the Ferguson for whose head so many hundred pounds have been offered." And this man, at once unprincipled and brainsick, had in his keeping the understanding and the conscience of the unhappy Monmouth.†

His reception at Bridgewater.

Bridgewater was one of the few towns which still had some Whig magistrates. The Mayor and Aldermen came in their robes to welcome the Duke, walked before him in procession to the high cross, and there proclaimed him King. His troops found excellent quarters, and were furnished with necessaries at little or no cost by the people of the town and neighbourhood. He took up his residence in the Castle, a building which had been honoured by several royal visits. In the Castle Field his army was encamped. It now consisted of about six thousand men, and might easily have been increased to double the number, but for the want of arms. The Duke had brought with him from the Continent but a scanty supply of pikes and muskets. Many of his followers had, therefore, no other weapons than such as could be fashioned out of the tools which they had used in husbandry or mining. Of these rude implements of war the most formidable was made by fastening the blade of a scythe erect on a

* Persecution Exposed, by John Whiting.

† Harl. MS. 6845.

Digitized by Google

strong pole.* The tithing men of the country round Taunton and Bridgewater received orders to search everywhere for scythes and to bring all that could be found to the camp. It was impossible, however, even with the help of these contrivances, to supply the demand; and great numbers who were desirous to enlist were sent away.†

The foot were divided into six regiments. Many of the men had been in the militia, and still wore their uniforms, red and yellow. The cavalry were about a thousand in number; but most of them had only large colts, such as were then bred in great herds on the marshes of Somersetshire for the purpose of supplying London with coach horses and cart horses. These animals were so far from being fit for any military purpose that they had not yet learned to obey the bridle, and became ungovernable as soon as they heard a gun fired or a drum beaten. A small body guard of forty young men, well armed and mounted at their own charge, attended Monmouth. The people of Bridgewater, who were enriched by a thriving coast trade, furnished him with a small sum of money.‡

Preparations of the government to oppose him.

All this time the forces of the government were fast assembling. On the west of the rebel army, Albemarle still kept together a large body of Devonshire militia. On the east, the trainbands of Wiltshire had mustered under the command of Thomas Herbert, Earl of Pembroke. On the north east, Henry Somerset, Duke of Beaufort, was in arms. The power of Beaufort bore some faint resemblance to that of the great barons of the fifteenth century. He was President of Wales and Lord Lieutenant of four English counties. His official tours through the extensive region in which he represented the majesty of the throne were scarcely

* One of these weapons may still be seen in the Tower.

† Grey's Narrative; Paschall's Narrative in the Appendix to Heywood's Vindication.

‡ Oldmixon, 702.

Digitized by Google

inferior in pomp to royal progresses. His household at Badminton was regulated after the fashion of an earlier generation. The land to a great extent round his pleasure grounds was in his own hands; and the labourers who cultivated it formed part of his family. Nine tables were every day spread under his roof for two hundred persons. A crowd of gentlemen and pages were under the orders of the steward. A whole troop of cavalry obeyed the master of the horse. The fame of the kitchen, the cellar, the kennel, and the stables was spread over all England. The gentry, many miles round, were proud of the magnificence of their great neighbour, and were at the same time charmed by his affability and good nature. He was a zealous Cavalier of the old school. At this crisis, therefore, he used his whole influence and authority in support of the crown, and occupied Bristol with the trainbands of Gloucestershire, who seem to have been better disciplined than most other troops of that description.*

In the counties more remote from Somersetshire the supporters of the throne were on the alert. The militia of Sussex began to march westward, under the command of Richard, Lord Lumley, who, though he had lately been converted from the Roman Catholic religion, was still firm in his allegiance to a Roman Catholic king. James Bertie, Earl of Abingdon, called out the array of Oxfordshire. John Fell, Bishop of Oxford, who was also Dean of Christchurch, summoned the undergraduates of his University to take arms for the crown. The gownsmen crowded to give in their names. Christchurch alone furnished near a hundred pikemen and musketeers. Young noblemen and gentlemen commoners acted as

* North's Life of Guildford, 132. Accounts of Beaufort's progress through Wales and the neighbouring counties are in the London Gazettes of July 1684. Letter of Beaufort to Clarendon, June 19. 1685.

Digitized by Google

officers; and the eldest son of the Lord Lieutenant was Colonel.*

But it was chiefly on the regular troops that the King relied. Churchill had been sent westward with the Blues; and Feversham was following with all the forces that could be spared from the neighbourhood of London. A courier had started for Holland with a letter directing Skelton instantly to request that the three English regiments in the Dutch service might be sent to the Thames. When the request was made, the party hostile to the House of Orange, headed by the deputies of Amsterdam, again tried to cause delay. But the energy of William, who had almost as much at stake as James, and who saw Monmouth's progress with serious uneasiness, bore down opposition; and in a few days the troops sailed.† The three Scotch regiments were already in England. They had arrived at Gravesend in excellent condition, and James had reviewed them on Blackheath. He repeatedly declared to the Dutch Ambassador that he had never in his life seen finer or better disciplined soldiers, and expressed the warmest gratitude to the Prince of Orange and the States for so valuable and seasonable a reinforcement. This satisfaction, however, was not unmixed. Excellently as the men went through their drill, they were not untainted with Dutch politics and Dutch divinity. One of them was shot and another flogged for drinking the Duke of Monmouth's health. It was therefore not thought advisable to place them in the post of danger. They were kept in the neighbourhood of London till the end of the campaign. But their arrival enabled the King to send to the West some infantry which would otherwise have been wanted in the capital.‡

* Bishop Fell to Clarendon, June 20.; Abingdon to Clarendon, June 20. 25, 26. 1685; Lansdowne MS. 846.

† Avaux, July $\frac{5}{15}$, $\frac{6}{16}$ 1685.

‡ Van Citters, $\frac{\text{June 30.}}{\text{July 10.}}$, July $\frac{3}{13}$. $\frac{21}{31}$. 1685; Avaux Neg. July $\frac{5}{15}$.; London Gazette, July 6.

Digitized by Google

While the government was thus preparing for a conflict with the rebels in the field, precautions of a different kind were not neglected. In London alone two hundred of those persons who were thought most likely to be at the head of a Whig movement were arrested. Among the prisoners were some merchants of great note. Every man who was obnoxious to the Court went in fear. A general gloom overhung the capital. Business languished on the Exchange; and the theatres were so generally deserted that a new opera, written by Dryden, and set off by decorations of unprecedented magnificence, was withdrawn, because the receipts would not cover the expenses of the performance.* The magistrates and clergy were everywhere active. The Dissenters were everywhere closely observed. In Cheshire and Shropshire a fierce persecution raged: in Northamptonshire arrests were numerous; and the gaol of Oxford was crowded with prisoners. No Puritan divine, however moderate his opinions, however guarded his conduct, could feel any confidence that he should not be torn from his family and flung into a dungeon.†

Meanwhile Monmouth advanced from Bridgewater, harassed through the whole march by Churchill, who appears to have done all that, with a handful of men, it was possible for a brave and skilful officer to effect. The rebel army, much annoyed both by the enemy and by a heavy fall of rain, halted in the evening of the twenty-second of June at Glastonbury. The houses of the little town did not afford shelter for so large a force. Some of the troops were therefore quartered in the churches, and others lighted their fires among the venerable ruins of the Abbey, once the wealthiest religious house in our island. From

* Barillon, July $\frac{8}{18}$. 1685; Scott's preface to Albion and Albanius.

† Abingdon to Clarendon, June 29. 1685; Life of Philip Henry, by Bates.

Digitized by Google

Glastonbury the Duke marched to Wells, and from Wells to Shepton Mallet.*

His design on Bristol.

Hitherto he seems to have wandered from place to place with no other object than that of collecting troops. It was now necessary for him to form some plan of military operations. His first scheme was to seize Bristol. Many of the chief inhabitants of that important place were Whigs. One of the ramifications of the Whig plot had extended thither. The garrison consisted only of the Gloucestershire trainbands. If Beaufort and his rustic followers could be overpowered before the regular troops arrived, the rebels would at once find themselves possessed of ample pecuniary resources: the credit of Monmouth's arms would be raised; and his friends throughout the kingdom would be encouraged to declare themselves. Bristol had fortifications which, on the north of the Avon towards Gloucestershire, were weak, but on the south towards Somersetshire were much stronger. It was therefore determined that the attack should be made on the Gloucestershire side. But for this purpose it was necessary to take a circuitous route, and to cross the Avon at Keynsham. The bridge at Keynsham had been partly demolished by the militia, and was at present impassable. A detachment was therefore sent forward to make the necessary repairs. The other troops followed more slowly, and on the evening of the twenty-fourth of June halted for repose at Pensford. At Pensford they were only five miles from the Somersetshire side of Bristol; but the Gloucestershire side, which could be reached only by going round through Keynsham, was distant a long day's march.†

That night was one of great tumult and expectation

* London Gazette, June 22. and June 25. 1685; Wade's Confession; Oldmixon, 703.; Harl. MS. 6845.

† Wade's Confession.

Digitized by Google

in Bristol. The partisans of Monmouth knew that he was almost within sight of their city, and imagined that he would be among them before daybreak. About an hour after sunset a merchantman lying at the quay took fire. Such an occurrence, in a port crowded with shipping, could not but excite great alarm. The whole river was in commotion. The streets were crowded. Seditious cries were heard amidst the darkness and confusion. It was afterwards asserted, both by Whigs and by Tories, that the fire had been kindled by the friends of Monmouth, in the hope that the trainbands would be busied in preventing the conflagration from spreading, and that in the meantime the rebel army would make a bold push, and would enter the city on the Somersetshire side. If such was the design of the incendiaries, it completely failed. Beaufort, instead of sending his men to the quay, kept them all night drawn up under arms round the beautiful church of Saint Mary Redcliff, on the south of the Avon. He would see Bristol burned down, he said, nay, he would burn it down himself, rather than that it should be occupied by traitors. He was able, with the help of some regular cavalry which had joined him from Chippenham a few hours before, to prevent an insurrection. It might perhaps have been beyond his power at once to overawe the malecontents within the walls and to repel an attack from without: but no such attack was made. The fire, which caused so much commotion at Bristol, was distinctly seen at Pensford. Monmouth, however, did not think it expedient to change his plan. He remained quiet till sunrise, and then marched to Keynsham. There he found the bridge repaired. He determined to let his army rest during the afternoon, and, as soon as night came, to proceed to Bristol.*

* Wade's Confession; Oldmixon, 703.; Harl. MS. 6845.; Charge of Jeffreys to the grand jury of Bristol, Sept. 21. 1685.

Digitized by Google

But it was too late. The King's forces were now near at hand. Colonel Oglethorpe, at the head of about a hundred men of the Life Guards dashed into Keynsham, scattered two troops of rebel horse which ventured to oppose him, and retired after inflicting much injury and suffering little. In these circumstances it was thought necessary to relinquish the design on Bristol.* He relinquishes that design.

But what was to be done? Several schemes were proposed and discussed. It was suggested that Monmouth might hasten to Gloucester, might cross the Severn there, might break down the bridge behind him, and, with his right flank protected by the river, might march through Worcestershire into Shropshire and Cheshire. He had formerly made a progress through those counties, and had been received there with as much enthusiasm as in Somersetshire and Devonshire. His presence might revive the zeal of his old friends; and his army might in a few days be swollen to double its present numbers.

On full consideration, however, it appeared that this plan, though specious, was impracticable. The rebels were ill shod for such work as they had lately undergone, and were exhausted by toiling, day after day, through deep mud under heavy rain. Harassed and impeded as they would be at every stage by the enemy's cavalry, they could not hope to reach Gloucester without being overtaken by the main body of the royal troops, and forced to a general action under every disadvantage.

Then it was proposed to enter Wiltshire. Persons who professed to know that county well assured the Duke that he would be joined there by such strong reinforcements as would make it safe for him to give battle.†

* London Gazette, June 29. 1685; Wade's Confession.

† Wade's Confession.

Digitized by Google

He took this advice, and turned towards Wiltshire. He first summoned Bath. But Bath was strongly garrisoned for the King; and Feversham was fast approaching. The rebels, therefore, made no attempt on the walls, but hastened to Philip's Norton, where they halted on the evening of the twenty-sixth of June.

Feversham followed them thither. Early on the morning of the twenty-seventh they were alarmed by tidings that he was close at hand. They got into order, and lined the hedges leading to the town.

The advanced guard of the royal army soon appeared. It consisted of about five hundred men, commanded by the Duke of Grafton, a youth of bold spirit and rough manners, who was probably eager to show that he had no share in the disloyal schemes of his half brother. Grafton soon found himself in a deep lane with fences on both sides of him, from which a galling fire of musketry was kept up. Still he pushed boldly on till he came to the entrance of Philip's Norton. There his way was crossed by a barricade, from which a third fire met him full in front. His men now lost heart, and made the best of their way back. Before they got out of the lane more than a hundred of them had been killed or wounded. Grafton's retreat was intercepted by some of the rebel cavalry: but he cut his way gallantly through them, and came off safe.*

Skirmish at Philip's Norton.

The advanced guard, thus repulsed, fell back on the main body of the royal forces. The two armies were now face to face; and a few shots were exchanged that did little or no execution. Neither side was impatient to come to action. Feversham did not wish to fight till his artillery came up, and fell back to Bradford. Monmouth, as soon as the night closed in, quitted his position, marched south-

* London Gazette, July 2. 1685; Barillon, July $\frac{4}{14}$; Wade's Confession.

Digitized by Google

ward, and by daybreak arrived at Frome, where he hoped to find reinforcements.

Frome was as zealous in his cause as either Taunton or Bridgewater, but could do nothing to serve him. There had been a rising a few days before; and Monmouth's Declaration had been posted up in the market place. But the news of this movement had been carried to the Earl of Pembroke, who lay at no great distance with the Wiltshire militia. He had instantly marched to Frome, had routed a mob of rustics who, with scythes and pitchforks, attempted to oppose him, had entered the town and had disarmed the inhabitants. No weapons, therefore, were left there; nor was Monmouth able to furnish any.*

Despondence of Monmouth.

The rebel army was in evil case. The march of the preceding night had been wearisome. The rain had fallen in torrents; and the roads had become mere quagmires. Nothing was heard of the promised succours from Wiltshire. One messenger brought news that Argyle's forces had been dispersed in Scotland. Another reported that Feversham, having been joined by his artillery, was about to advance. Monmouth understood war too well not to know that his followers, with all their courage and all their zeal, were no match for regular soldiers. He had till lately flattered himself with the hope that some of those regiments which he had formerly commanded would pass over to his standard: but that hope he was now compelled to relinquish. His heart failed him. He could scarcely muster firmness enough to give orders. In his misery he complained bitterly of the evil counsellors who had induced him to quit his happy retreat in Brabant. Against Wildman in particular he broke forth into violent imprecations.† And now an ignominious

* London Gazette, June 29. 1685; Van Citters, $\frac{\text{June 30.}}{\text{July 10.}}$

† Harl. MS. 6845.; Wade's Confession.

Digitized by Google

thought rose in his weak and agitated mind. He would leave to the mercy of the government the thousands who had, at his call and for his sake, abandoned their quiet fields and dwellings. He would steal away with his chief officers, would gain some seaport before his flight was suspected, would escape to the Continent, and would forget his ambition and his shame in the arms of Lady Wentworth. He seriously discussed this scheme with his leading advisers. Some of them, trembling for their necks, listened to it with approbation: but Grey, who, by the admission of his detractors, was intrepid everywhere except where swords were clashing and guns going off around him, opposed the dastardly proposition with great ardour, and implored the Duke to face every danger rather than requite with ingratitude and treachery the devoted attachment of the Western peasantry.*

The scheme of flight was abandoned: but it was not now easy to form any plan for a campaign. To advance towards London would have been madness; for the road lay right across Salisbury Plain; and on that vast open space regular troops, and above all regular cavalry, would have acted with every advantage against undisciplined men. At this juncture a report reached the camp that the rustics of the marshes near Axbridge had risen in defence of the Protestant religion, had armed themselves with flails, bludgeons, and pitchforks, and were assembling by thousands at Bridgewater. Monmouth determined to return thither, and to strengthen himself with these new allies.†

The rebels accordingly proceeded to Wells, and arrived there in no amiable temper. They were, with few exceptions, hostile to Prelacy; and they

* Wade's Confession; Eachard, iii. 766.

† Wade's Confession.

Digitized by Google

showed their hostility in a way very little to their honour. They not only tore the lead from the roof of the magnificent Cathedral to make bullets, an act for which they might fairly plead the necessities of war, but wantonly defaced the ornaments of the building. Grey with difficulty preserved the altar from the insults of some ruffians who wished to carouse round it, by taking his stand before it with his sword drawn.*

On Thursday, the second of July, Monmouth again entered Bridgewater, in circumstances far less cheering than those in which he had marched thence ten days before. The reinforcement which he found there was inconsiderable. The royal army was close upon him. At one moment he thought of fortifying the town; and hundreds of labourers were summoned to dig trenches and throw up mounds. Then his mind recurred to the plan of marching into Cheshire, a plan which he had rejected as impracticable when he was at Keynsham, and which assuredly was not more practicable now that he was at Bridgewater.† He returns to Bridgewater.

While he was thus wavering between projects equally hopeless, the King's forces came in sight. They consisted of about two thousand five hundred regular troops, and of about fifteen hundred of the Wiltshire militia. Early on the morning of Sunday, the fifth of July, they left Somerton, and pitched their tents that day about three miles from Bridgewater, on the plain of Sedgemoor. The royal army encamps at Sedgemoor.

Doctor Peter Mew, Bishop of Winchester, accompanied them. This prelate had in his youth borne arms for Charles the First against the Parliament. Neither his years nor his profession had wholly extinguished his martial ardour; and he probably

* London Gazette, July 6. Oldmixon, 703. 1685; Van Citters, July $\frac{3}{13}$.; † Wade's Confession.

Digitized by Google

thought that the appearance of a father of the Protestant Church in the King's camp might confirm the loyalty of some honest men who were wavering between their horror of Popery and their horror of rebellion.

The steeple of the parish church of Bridgewater is said to be the loftiest in Somersetshire, and commands a wide view over the surrounding country. Monmouth, accompanied by some of his officers, went up to the top of the square tower from which the spire ascends, and observed through a telescope the position of the enemy. Beneath him lay a flat expanse, now rich with cornfields and apple trees, but then, as its name imports, for the most part a dreary morass. When the rains were heavy, and the Parret and its tributary streams rose above their banks, this tract was often flooded. It was indeed anciently part of that great swamp which is renowned in our early chronicles as having arrested the progress of two successive races of invaders, which long protected the Celts against the aggressions of the kings of Wessex, and which sheltered Alfred from the pursuit of the Danes. In those remote times this region could be traversed only in boats. It was a vast pool, wherein were scattered many islets of shifting and treacherous soil, overhung with rank jungle, and swarming with deer and wild swine. Even in the days of the Tudors, the traveller whose journey lay from Ilchester to Bridgewater was forced to make a circuit of several miles in order to avoid the waters. When Monmouth looked upon Sedgemoor, it had been partially reclaimed by art, and was intersected by many deep and wide trenches which, in that country, are called rhines. In the midst of the moor rose, clustering round the towers of churches, a few villages, of which the names seem to indicate that they once were surrounded by waves. In one of these villages, called Weston Zoyland, the royal cavalry lay; and

Digitized by Google

Feversham had fixed his head quarters there. Many persons still living have seen the daughter of the servant girl who waited on him that day at table; and a large dish of Persian ware, which was set before him, is still carefully preserved in the neighbourhood. It is to be observed that the population of Somersetshire does not, like that of the manufacturing districts, consist of emigrants from distant places. It is by no means unusual to find farmers who cultivate the same land which their ancestors cultivated when the Plantagenets reigned in England. The Somersetshire traditions are, therefore, of no small value to a historian.*

At a greater distance from Bridgewater lies the village of Middlezoy. In that village and its neighbourhood, the Wiltshire militia were quartered, under the command of Pembroke.

On the open moor, not far from Chedzoy, were encamped several battalions of regular infantry. Monmouth looked gloomily on them. He could not but remember how, a few years before, he had, at the head of a column composed of some of those very men, driven before him in confusion the fierce enthusiasts who defended Bothwell Bridge. He could distinguish among the hostile ranks that gallant band which was then called, from the name of its Colonel, Dumbarton's regiment, but which has long been known as the first of the line, and which, in all the four quarters of the world, has nobly supported its early reputation. "I know those men," said Monmouth; "they will fight. If I had but them, all would go well." †

* Matt. West. Flor. Hist., A.D. 788; MS. Chronicle quoted by Mr. Sharon Turner in the History of the Anglo-Saxons, book IV. chap. xix.; Drayton's Polyolbion, iii.; Leland's Itinerary; Oldmixon, 703. Oldmixon was then at Bridgewater, and probably saw the Duke on the church tower. The dish mentioned in the text is the property of Mr. Stradling, who has taken laudable pains to preserve the relics and traditions of the Western insurrection.

† Oldmixon, 703.

Digitized by Google

Yet the aspect of the enemy was not altogether discouraging. The three divisions of the royal army lay far apart from one another. There was an appearance of negligence and of relaxed discipline in all their movements. It was reported that they were drinking themselves drunk with the Zoyland cider. The incapacity of Feversham, who commanded in chief, was notorious. Even at this momentous crisis he thought only of eating and sleeping. Churchill was indeed a captain equal to tasks far more arduous than that of scattering a crowd of ill armed and ill trained peasants. But the genius, which, at a later period, humbled six Marshals of France, was not now in its proper place. Feversham told Churchill little, and gave him no encouragement to offer any suggestion. The lieutenant, conscious of superior abilities and science, impatient of the control of a chief whom he despised, and trembling for the fate of the army, nevertheless preserved his characteristic self-command, and dissembled his feelings so well that Feversham praised his submissive alacrity, and promised to report it to the King.*

Monmouth, having observed the disposition of the royal forces, and having been apprised of the state in which they were, conceived that a night attack might be attended with success. He resolved to run the hazard; and preparations were instantly made.

It was Sunday; and his followers, who had, for the most part, been brought up after the Puritan fashion, passed a great part of the day in religious exercises. The Castle Field, in which the army was encamped, presented a spectacle such as, since the disbanding of Cromwell's soldiers, England had never seen. The dissenting preachers who had taken arms against Popery, and some of whom had probably fought in the great civil war, prayed and preached in

* Churchill to Clarendon, July 4. 1685.

Digitized by Google

red coats and huge jackboots, with swords by their sides. Ferguson was one of those who harangued. He took for his text the awful imprecation by which the Israelites who dwelt beyond Jordan cleared themselves from the charge ignorantly brought against them by their brethren on the other side of the river. "The Lord God of Gods, the Lord God of Gods, he knoweth; and Israel he shall know. If it be in rebellion, or if in transgression against the Lord, save us not this day." *

That an attack was to be made under cover of the night was no secret in Bridgewater. The town was full of women, who had repaired thither by hundreds from the surrounding region, to see their husbands, sons, lovers, and brothers once more. There were many sad partings that day; and many parted never to meet again.† The report of the intended attack came to the ears of a young girl who was zealous for the King. Though of modest character, she had the courage to resolve that she would herself bear the intelligence to Feversham. She stole out of Bridgewater, and made her way to the royal camp. But that camp was not a place where female innocence could be safe. Even the officers, despising alike the irregular force to which they were opposed, and the negligent general who commanded them, had indulged largely in wine, and were ready for any excess of licentiousness and cruelty. One of them seized the unhappy maiden, refused to listen to her errand, and brutally outraged her. She fled in agonies of rage and shame, leaving the wicked army to its doom.‡

And now the time for the great hazard drew near.

* Oldmixon, 703.; Observator, Aug. 1. 1685.

† Paschall's Narrative in Heywood's Appendix.

‡ Kennet, ed. 1719, iii. 432. I am forced to believe that this lamentable story is true. The Bishop declares that it was communicated to him in the year 1718 by a brave officer of the Blues, who had fought at Sedgemoor, and who had himself seen the poor girl depart in an agony of distress.

Digitized by Google

The night was not ill suited for such an enterprise. The moon was indeed at the full, and the northern streamers were shining brilliantly. But the marsh fog lay so thick on Sedgemoor that no object could be discerned there at the distance of fifty paces.*

Battle of Sedgemoor.

The clock struck eleven; and the Duke with his body guard rode out of the Castle. He was not in the frame of mind which befits one who is about to strike a decisive blow. The very children who pressed to see him pass observed, and long remembered, that his look was sad and full of evil augury. His army marched by a circuitous path, near six miles in length, towards the royal encampment on Sedgemoor. Part of the route is to this day called War Lane. The foot were led by Monmouth himself. The horse were confided to Grey, in spite of the remonstrances of some who remembered the mishap at Bridport. Orders were given that strict silence should be preserved, that no drum should be beaten, and no shot fired. The word by which the insurgents were to recognise one another in the darkness was Soho. It had doubtless been selected in allusion to Soho Fields in London, where their leader's palace stood.†

At about one in the morning of Monday the sixth

* Narrative of an officer of the Horse Guards in Kennet, ed. 1719, iii. 432.; MS. Journal of the Western Rebellion, kept by Mr. Edward Dummer; Dryden's Hind and Panther, part II. The lines of Dryden are remarkable: —

"Such were the pleasing triumphs of the sky
For James's late nocturnal victory,
The pledge of his almighty patron's love,
The fireworks which his angels made above.
I saw myself the lambent easy light
Gild the brown horror and dispel the night.
The messenger with speed the tidings bore,
News which three labouring nations did restore;
But heaven's own Nuntius was arrived before."

† It has been said by several writers, and among them by Pennant, that the district in London called Soho derived its name from the watchword of Monmouth's army at Sedgemoor. Mention of Soho Fields will be found in many books printed before the Western insurrection; for example, in Chamberlayne's State of England, 1684.

Digitized by Google

of July, the rebels were on the open moor. But between them and the enemy lay three broad rhines filled with water and soft mud. Two of these, called the Black Ditch and the Langmoor Rhine, Monmouth knew that he must pass. But, strange to say, the existence of a trench, called the Bussex Rhine, which immediately covered the royal encampment, had not been mentioned to him by any of his scouts.

The wains which carried the ammunition remained at the entrance of the moor. The horse and foot, in a long narrow column, passed the Black Ditch by a causeway. There was a similar causeway across the Langmoor Rhine: but the guide, in the fog, missed his way. There was some delay and some tumult before the error could be rectified. At length the passage was effected: but, in the confusion, a pistol went off. Some men of the Horse Guards, who were on watch, heard the report, and perceived that a great multitude was advancing through the mist. They fired their carbines, and galloped off in different directions to give the alarm. Some hastened to Weston Zoyland, where the cavalry lay. One trooper spurred to the encampment of the infantry, and cried out vehemently that the enemy was at hand. The drums of Dumbarton's regiment beat to arms; and the men got fast into their ranks. It was time; for Monmouth was already drawing up his army for action. He ordered Grey to lead the way with the cavalry, and followed himself at the head of the infantry. Grey pushed on till his progress was unexpectedly arrested by the Bussex Rhine. On the opposite side of the ditch the King's foot were hastily forming in order of battle.

"For whom are you?" called out an officer of the Foot Guards. "For the King," replied a voice from the ranks of the rebel cavalry. "For which King?" was then demanded. The answer was a shout of "King Monmouth," mingled with the war cry, which

Digitized by Google

forty years before had been inscribed on the colours of the parliamentary regiments, "God with us." The royal troops instantly fired such a volley of musketry as sent the rebel horse flying in all directions. The world agreed to ascribe this ignominious rout to Grey's pusillanimity. Yet it is by no means clear that Churchill would have succeeded better at the head of men who had never before handled arms on horseback, and whose horses were unused, not only to stand fire, but to obey the rein.

A few minutes after the Duke's horse had dispersed themselves over the moor, his infantry came up running fast, and guided through the gloom by the lighted matches of Dumbarton's regiment.

Monmouth was startled by finding that a broad and profound trench lay between him and the camp which he had hoped to surprise. The insurgents halted on the edge of the rhine, and fired. Part of the royal infantry on the opposite bank returned the fire. During three quarters of an hour the roar of the musketry was incessant. The Somersetshire peasants behaved themselves as if they had been veteran soldiers, save only that they levelled their pieces too high.

But now the other divisions of the royal army were in motion. The Life Guards and Blues came pricking fast from Weston Zoyland, and scattered in an instant some of Grey's horse, who had attempted to rally. The fugitives spread a panic among their comrades in the rear, who had charge of the ammunition. The waggoners drove off at full speed, and never stopped till they were many miles from the field of battle. Monmouth had hitherto done his part like a stout and able warrior. He had been seen on foot, pike in hand, encouraging his infantry by voice and by example. But he was too well acquainted with military affairs not to know that all was over. His men had lost the advantage which

Digitized by Google

surprise and darkness had given them. They were deserted by the horse and by the ammunition waggons. The King's forces were now united and in good order. Feversham had been awakened by the firing, had got out of bed, had adjusted his cravat, had looked at himself well in the glass, and had come to see what his men were doing. Meanwhile, what was of much more importance, Churchill had rapidly made an entirely new disposition of the royal infantry. The day was about to break. The event of a conflict on an open plain, by broad sunlight, could not be doubtful. Yet Monmouth should have felt that it was not for him to fly, while thousands whom affection for him had hurried to destruction were still fighting manfully in his cause. But vain hopes and the intense love of life prevailed. He saw that if he tarried the royal cavalry would soon intercept his retreat. He mounted and rode from the field.

Yet his foot, though deserted, made a gallant stand. The Life Guards attacked them on the right, the Blues on the left: but the Somersetshire clowns, with their scythes and the but ends of their muskets, faced the royal horse like old soldiers. Oglethorpe made a vigorous attempt to break them and was manfully repulsed. Sarsfield, a brave Irish officer, whose name afterwards obtained a melancholy celebrity, charged on the other flank. His men were beaten back. He was himself struck to the ground, and lay for a time as one dead. But the struggle of the hardy rustics could not last. Their powder and ball were spent. Cries were heard of "Ammunition! For God's sake ammunition!" But no ammunition was at hand. And now the King's artillery came up. It had been posted half a mile off, on the high road from Weston Zoyland to Bridgewater. So defective were then the appointments of an English army that there would have been much difficulty in dragging the great guns to the place where the battle was

Digitized by Google

raging, had not the Bishop of Winchester offered his coach horses and traces for the purpose. This interference of a Christian prelate in a matter of blood has, with strange inconsistency, been condemned by some Whig writers who can see nothing criminal in the conduct of the numerous Puritan ministers then in arms against the government. Even when the guns had arrived, there was such a want of gunners that a sergeant of Dumbarton's regiment was forced to take on himself the management of several pieces.* The cannon, however, though ill served, brought the engagement to a speedy close. The pikes of the rebel battalions began to shake: the ranks broke; the King's cavalry charged again, and bore down everything before them; the King's infantry came pouring across the ditch. Even in that extremity the Mendip miners stood bravely to their arms, and sold their lives dearly. But the rout was in a few minutes complete. Three hundred of the soldiers had been killed or wounded. Of the rebels more than a thousand lay dead on the moor.†

* There is a warrant of James directing that forty pounds should be paid to Sergeant Weems, of Dumbarton's regiment, "for good service in the action at Sedgemoor in firing the great guns against the rebels." — Historical Record of the First or Royal Regiment of Foot.

† James the Second's account of the battle of Sedgemoor in Lord Hardwicke's State Papers; Wade's Confession; Ferguson's MS. Narrative in Eachard, iii. 768.; Narrative of an officer of the Horse Guards in Kennet, ed. 1719, iii. 432.; London Gazette, July 9. 1685; Oldmixon, 703.; Paschall's Narrative; Burnet, i. 643.; Evelyn's Diary, July 8.; Van Citters, July $\frac{7}{17}$.; Barillon, July $\frac{8}{18}$.; Reresby's Memoirs; the Duke of Buckingham's Battle of Sedgemoor, a Farce; MS. Journal of the Western Rebellion, kept by Mr. Edward Dummer, then serving in the train of artillery employed by His Majesty for the suppression of the same. The last mentioned manuscript is in the Pepysian library, and is of the greatest value, not on account of the narrative, which contains little that is remarkable, but on account of the plans, which exhibit the battle in four or five different stages.

"The history of a battle," says the greatest of living generals, "is not unlike the history of a ball. Some individuals may recollect all the little events of

Digitized by Google

So ended the last fight, deserving the name of battle, that has been fought on English ground. The impression left on the simple inhabitants of the neighbourhood was deep and lasting. That impres-

which the great result is the battle won or lost; but no individual can recollect the order in which, or the exact moment at which, they occurred, which makes all the difference as to their value or importance. . . . . Just to show you how little reliance can be placed even on what are supposed the best accounts of a battle, I mention that there are some circumstances mentioned in General ——'s account which did not occur as he relates them. It is impossible to say when each important occurrence took place, or in what order."— Wellington Papers, Aug. 8. and 17. 1815.

The battle concerning which the Duke of Wellington wrote thus was that of Waterloo, fought only a few weeks before, by broad day, under his own vigilant and experienced eye. What, then, must be the difficulty of compiling from twelve or thirteen narratives an account of a battle fought more than a hundred and sixty years ago in such darkness that not a man of those engaged could see fifty paces before him? The difficulty is aggravated by the circumstance that those witnesses who had the best opportunity of knowing the truth were by no means inclined to tell it. The paper which I have placed at the head of my list of authorities was evidently drawn up with extreme partiality to Feversham. Wade was writing under the dread of the halter. Ferguson, who was seldom scrupulous about the truth of his assertions, lied on this occasion like Bobadil or Parolles. Oldmixon, who was a boy at Bridgewater when the battle was fought, and passed a great part of his subsequent life there, was so much under the influence of local passions that his local information was useless to him. His desire to magnify the valour of the Somersetshire peasants, a valour which their enemies acknowledged, and which did not need to be set off by exaggeration and fiction, led him to compose an absurd romance. The eulogy which Barillon, a Frenchman accustomed to despise raw levies, pronounced on the vanquished army, is of much more value "Son infanterie fit fort bien. On eut de la peine à les rompre, et les soldats combattoient avec les crosses de mousquet et les scies qu'ils avoient au bout de grands bastons au lieu de picques."

Little is now to be learned by visiting the field of battle; for the face of the country has been greatly changed; and the old Bussex Rhine, on the banks of which the great struggle took place, has long disappeared. The Rhine now called by that name is of later date, and takes a different course.

I have derived much assistance from Mr. Roberts's account of the battle. Life of Monmouth, chap. xxii. His narrative is in the main confirmed by Dummer's plans.

Digitized by Google

sion, indeed, has been frequently renewed. For even in our own time the plough and the spade have not seldom turned up ghastly memorials of the slaughter, skulls, and thighbones, and strange weapons made out of implements of husbandry. Old peasants related very recently that, in their childhood, they were accustomed to play on the moor at the fight between King James's men and King Monmouth's men, and that King Monmouth's men always raised the cry of Soho.*

What seems most extraordinary in the battle of Sedgemoor is that the event should have been for a moment doubtful, and that the rebels should have resisted so long. That five or six thousand colliers and ploughmen should contend during an hour with half that number of regular cavalry and infantry would now be thought a miracle. Our wonder will, perhaps, be diminished when we remember that, in the time of James the Second, the discipline of the regular army was extremely lax, and that, on the other hand, the peasantry were accustomed to serve in the militia. The difference, therefore, between a regiment of the Foot Guards and a regiment of clowns just enrolled, though doubtless considerable, was by no means what it now is. Monmouth did not lead a mere mob to attack good soldiers. For his followers were not altogether without a tincture of soldiership; and Feversham's troops, when compared with English troops of our time, might almost be called a mob.

It was four o'clock: the sun was rising; and the routed army came pouring into the streets of Bridgewater. The uproar, the blood, the gashes, the ghastly figures which sank down and never rose again, spread horror and dismay through the town. The pursuers, too, were close behind. Those inhabitants who had favoured the insurrection expected sack and massacre,

* I learned these things from persons living close to Sedgemoor.

Digitized by Google

and implored the protection of their neighbours who professed the Roman Catholic religion, or had made themselves conspicuous by Tory politics; and it is acknowledged by the bitterest of Whig historians that this protection was kindly and generously given.*

During that day the conquerors continued to chase the fugitives. The neighbouring villagers long remembered with what a clatter of horsehoofs and what a storm of curses the whirlwind of cavalry swept by. Before evening five hundred prisoners had been crowded into the parish church of Weston Zoyland. Eighty of them were wounded; and five expired within the consecrated walls. Great numbers of labourers were impressed for the purpose of burying the slain. A few, who were notoriously partial to the vanquished side, were set apart for the hideous office of quartering the captives. The tithing men of the neighbouring parishes were busied in setting up gibbets and providing chains. All this while the bells of Weston Zoyland and Chedzoy rang joyously; and the soldiers sang and rioted on the moor amidst the corpses. For the farmers of the neighbourhood had made haste, as soon as the event of the fight was known, to send hogsheads of their best cider as peace offerings to the victors.† Pursuit of the rebels.

Feversham passed for a goodnatured man: but he was a foreigner, ignorant of the laws and careless of the feelings of the English. He was accustomed to the military license of France, and had learned from his great kinsman, the conqueror and devastator of the Palatinate, not indeed how to conquer, but how to devastate. A considerable number of prisoners were immediately selected for execution. Among them was a youth famous for his speed. Hopes were held out to him that his life Military executions.

* Oldmixon, 704.

† Locke's Western Rebellion; Stradling's Chilton Priory.

Digitized by Google

would be spared if he could run a race with one of the colts of the marsh. The space through which the man kept up with the horse is still marked by well known bounds on the moor, and is about three quarters of a mile. Feversham was not ashamed, after seeing the performance, to send the wretched performer to the gallows. The next day a long line of gibbets appeared on the road leading from Bridgewater to Weston Zoyland. On each gibbet a prisoner was suspended. Four of the sufferers were left to rot in irons.*

Flight of Monmouth.

Meanwhile Monmouth, accompanied by Grey, by Buyse, and by a few other friends, was flying from the field of battle. At Chedzoy he stopped a moment to mount a fresh horse and to hide his blue riband and his George. He then hastened towards the Bristol Channel. From the rising ground on the north of the field of battle he saw the flash and the smoke of the last volley fired by his deserted followers. Before six o'clock he was twenty miles from Sedgemoor. Some of his companions advised him to cross the water, and to seek refuge in Wales; and this would undoubtedly have been his wisest course. He would have been in Wales many hours before the news of his defeat was known there; and, in a country so wild and so remote from the seat of government, he might have remained long undiscovered. He determined, however, to push for Hampshire, in the hope that he might lurk in the cabins of deerstealers among the oaks of the New Forest, till means of conveyance to the Continent could be procured. He therefore, with Grey and the German, turned to the south east. But the way was beset with dangers. The three fugitives had to traverse a country in which every one already knew the event of the battle, and in which no traveller of

* Locke's Western Rebellion; Stradling's Chilton Priory; Oldmixon, 704.

Digitized by Google

suspicious appearance could escape a close scrutiny. They rode on all day, shunning towns and villages. Nor was this so difficult as it may now appear. For men then living could remember the time when the wild deer ranged freely through a succession of forests from the banks of the Avon in Wiltshire to the southern coast of Hampshire.* At length, on Cranbourne Chase, the strength of the horses failed. They were therefore turned loose. The bridles and saddles were concealed. Monmouth and his friends procured rustic attire, disguised themselves, and proceeded on foot towards the New Forest. They passed the night in the open air: but before morning they were surrounded on every side by toils. Lord Lumley, who lay at Ringwood with a strong body of the Sussex militia, had sent forth parties in every direction. Sir William Portman, with the Somerset militia, had formed a chain of posts from the sea to the northern extremity of Dorset. At five in the morning of the seventh, Grey, who had wandered from his friends, was seized by two of the Sussex scouts. He submitted to his fate with the calmness of one to whom suspense was more intolerable than despair. "Since we landed," he said, "I have not had one comfortable meal or one quiet night." It could hardly be doubted that the chief rebel was not far off. The pursuers redoubled their vigilance and activity. The cottages scattered over the heathy country on the boundaries of Dorsetshire and Hampshire were strictly examined by Lumley; and the clown with whom Monmouth had changed clothes was discovered. Portman came with a strong body of horse and foot to assist in the search. Attention was soon drawn to a place well fitted to shelter fugitives. It was an extensive tract of land separated by an enclosure from the open country, and divided by numerous hedges into small

* Aubrey's Natural History of Wiltshire, 1691.

Digitized by Google

fields. In some of these fields the rye, the pease, and the oats were high enough to conceal a man. Others were overgrown with fern and brambles. A poor woman reported that she had seen two strangers lurking in this covert. The near prospect of reward animated the zeal of the troops. It was agreed that every man who did his duty in the search should have a share of the promised five thousand pounds. The outer fence was strictly guarded: the space within was examined with indefatigable diligence; and several dogs of quick scent were turned out among the bushes. The day closed before the work could be completed: but careful watch was kept all night. Thirty times the fugitives ventured to look through the outer hedge: but everywhere they found a sentinel on the alert: once they were seen and fired at; they then separated and concealed themselves in different hiding places.

His capture.

At sunrise the next morning the search recommenced, and Buyse was found. He owned that he had parted from the Duke only a few hours before. The corn and copsewood were now beaten with more care than ever. At length a gaunt figure was discovered hidden in a ditch. The pursuers sprang on their prey. Some of them were about to fire: but Portman forbade all violence. The prisoner's dress was that of a shepherd; his beard, prematurely grey, was of several days' growth. He trembled greatly, and was unable to speak. Even those who had often seen him were at first in doubt whether this were truly the brilliant and graceful Monmouth. His pockets were searched by Portman, and in them were found, among some raw pease gathered in the rage of hunger, a watch, a purse of gold, a small treatise on fortification, an album filled with songs, receipts, prayers, and charms, and the George with which, many years before, King Charles the Second had decorated his favourite son. Messengers were instantly despatched to Whitehall

Digitized by Google

with the good news, and with the George as a token that the news was true. The prisoner was conveyed under a strong guard to Ringwood.*

And all was lost; and nothing remained but that he should prepare to meet death as became one who had thought himself not unworthy to wear the crown of William the Conqueror and of Richard the Lion-hearted, of the hero of Cressy and of the hero of Agincourt. The captive might easily have called to mind other domestic examples, still better suited to his condition. Within a hundred years, two sovereigns whose blood ran in his veins, one of them a delicate woman, had been placed in the same situation in which he now stood. They had shown, in the prison and on the scaffold, virtue of which, in the season of prosperity, they had seemed incapable, and had half redeemed great crimes and errors by enduring with Christian meekness and princely dignity all that victorious enemies could inflict. Of cowardice Monmouth had never been accused; and, even had he been wanting in constitutional courage, it might have been expected that the defect would be supplied by pride and by despair. The eyes of the whole world were upon him. The latest generations would know how, in that extremity, he had borne himself. To the brave peasants of the West he owed it to show that they had not poured forth their blood for a leader unworthy of their attachment. To her who had sacrificed everything for his sake he owed it so to bear himself that, though she might weep for him, she should not blush for him. It was not for him to lament and supplicate. His reason, too, should have told him that lamentation and supplication would be unavailing. He had done

* Account of the manner of taking the late Duke of Monmouth, published by His Majesty's command; Gazette de France, July $\frac{15}{25}$. 1685; Eachard, iii. 770.; Burnet, i. 664., and Dartmouth's note; Van Citters, July $\frac{15}{25}$. 1685.

Digitized by Google

that which could never be forgiven. He was in the grasp of one who never forgave.

But the fortitude of Monmouth was not that highest sort of fortitude which is derived from reflection and from selfrespect; nor had nature given him one of those stout hearts from which neither adversity nor peril can extort any sign of weakness. His courage rose and fell with his animal spirits. It was sustained on the field of battle by the excitement of action, by the hope of victory, by the strange influence of sympathy. All such aids were now taken away. The spoiled darling of the court and of the populace, accustomed to be loved and worshipped wherever he appeared, was now surrounded by stern gaolers in whose eyes he read his doom. Yet a few hours of gloomy seclusion, and he must die a violent and shameful death. His heart sank within him. Life seemed worth purchasing by any humiliation; nor could his mind, always feeble, and now distracted by terror, perceive that humiliation must degrade, but could not save him.

His letter to the King.

As soon as he reached Ringwood he wrote to the King. The letter was that of a man whom a craven fear had made insensible to shame. He professed in vehement terms his remorse for his treason. He affirmed that, when he promised his cousins at the Hague not to raise troubles in England, he had fully meant to keep his word. Unhappily he had afterwards been seduced from his allegiance by some horrid people who had heated his mind by calumnies and misled him by sophistry: but now he abhorred them: he abhorred himself. He begged in piteous terms that he might be admitted to the royal presence. There was a secret which he could not trust to paper, a secret which lay in a single word, and which, if he spoke that word, would secure the throne against all danger. On the following day he despatched letters, imploring the Queen

Digitized by Google

Dowager and the Lord Treasurer to intercede in his behalf.*

When it was known in London how he had abased himself the general surprise was great; and no man was more amazed than Barillon, who had resided in England during two bloody proscriptions, and had seen numerous victims, both of the Opposition and of the Court, submit to their fate without womanish entreaties and lamentations.†

Monmouth and Grey remained at Ringwood two days. They were then carried up to London, under the guard of a large body of regular troops and militia. In the coach with the Duke was an officer whose orders were to stab the prisoner if a rescue were attempted. At every town along the road the trainbands of the neighbourhood had been mustered under the command of the principal gentry. The march lasted three days, and terminated at Vauxhall, where a regiment, commanded by George Legge, Lord Dartmouth, was in readiness to receive the prisoners. They were put on board of a state barge, and carried down the river to Whitehall Stairs. Lumley and Portman had alternately watched the Duke day and night till they had brought him within the walls of the palace.‡ He is carried to London.

Both the demeanour of Monmouth and that of Grey, during the journey, filled all observers with surprise. Monmouth was altogether unnerved. Grey was not only calm but cheerful, talked pleasantly of horses, dogs, and field sports, and even made jocose allusions to the perilous situation in which he stood.

The King cannot be blamed for determining that

* The letter to the King was printed at the time by authority; that to the Queen Dowager will be found in Sir H. Ellis's Original Letters; that to Rochester in the Clarendon Correspondence.

† "On trouve," he wrote, "fort à redire icy qu'il ayt fait une chose si peu ordinaire aux Anglois." July ½. 1685.

‡ Account of the manner of taking the Duke of Monmouth; Gazette, July 16. 1685; Van Citters, July ½.

Digitized by Google

Monmouth should suffer death. Every man who heads a rebellion against an established government stakes his life on the event; and rebellion was the smallest part of Monmouth's crime. He had declared against his uncle a war without quarter. In the manifesto put forth at Lyme, James had been held up to execration as an incendiary, as an assassin who had strangled one innocent man and cut the throat of another, and, lastly, as the poisoner of his own brother. To spare an enemy who had not scrupled to resort to such extremities would have been an act of rare, perhaps of blamable generosity. But to see him and not to spare him was an outrage on humanity and decency.* This outrage the King resolved to commit. The arms of the prisoner were bound behind him with a silken cord; and, thus secured, he was ushered into the presence of the implacable kinsman whom he had wronged.

His interview with the King.

Then Monmouth threw himself on the ground, and crawled to the King's feet. He wept. He tried to embrace his uncle's knees with his pinioned arms. He begged for life, only life, life at any price. He owned that he had been guilty of a great crime, but tried to throw the blame on others, particularly on Argyle, who would rather have put his legs into the boots than have saved his own life by such baseness. By the ties of kindred, by the memory of the late King, who had been the best and truest of brothers, the unhappy man adjured James to show some mercy. James gravely replied that this repentance was of the latest, that he was sorry for the misery which the prisoner had brought on himself, but that the case was not one for lenity. A Declaration, filled with atrocious calumnies, had been put forth. The regal title had been assumed. For treasons so aggravated there could be no pardon on this side of the grave. The poor terrified Duke

* Barillon was evidently much shocked. "Il se vient," he says, "de passer icy une chose bien extraordinaire et fort opposée à l'usage ordinaire des autres nations." July ½. 1685.

Digitized by Google

vowed that he had never wished to take the crown, but had been led into that fatal error by others. As to the Declaration, he had not written it: he had not read it: he had signed it without looking at it: it was all the work of Ferguson, that bloody villain Ferguson. "Do you expect me to believe," said James, with contempt but too well merited, "that you set your hand to a paper of such moment without knowing what it contained?" One depth of infamy only remained; and even to that the prisoner descended. He was preeminently the champion of the Protestant religion. The interest of that religion had been his plea for conspiring against the government of his father, and for bringing on his country the miseries of civil war: yet he was not ashamed to hint that he was inclined to be reconciled to the Church of Rome. The King eagerly offered him spiritual assistance, but said nothing of pardon or respite. "Is there then no hope?" asked Monmouth. James turned away in silence. Then Monmouth strove to rally his courage, rose from his knees, and retired with a firmness which he had not shown since his overthrow.*

Grey was introduced next. He behaved with a propriety and fortitude which moved even the stern and resentful King, frankly owned himself guilty, made no excuses, and did not once stoop to ask his life. Both the prisoners were sent to the Tower by water. There was no tumult; but many thousands of people, with anxiety and sorrow in their faces, tried to catch a glimpse of the captives. The Duke's resolution failed as soon as he had left the royal presence. On his way to his prison he bemoaned himself, accused his followers, and abjectly implored the intercession of Dartmouth. "I know, my Lord, that you loved my father. For his sake, for God's

* Burnet, i. 644.; Evelyn's Diary, July 15.; Sir J. Bramston's Memoirs; Beresby's Memoirs; James to the Prince of Orange, July 14. 1685; Barillon, July $\frac{15}{25}$.; Buccleuch MS.

Digitized by Google

sake, try if there be any room for mercy.' Dartmouth replied that the King had spoken the truth, and that a subject who assumed the regal title excluded himself from all hope of pardon.*

Soon after Monmouth had been lodged in the Tower, he was informed that his wife had, by the royal command, been sent to see him. She was accompanied by the Earl of Clarendon, Keeper of the Privy Seal. Her husband received her very coldly, and addressed almost all his discourse to Clarendon, whose intercession he earnestly implored. Clarendon held out no hopes; and that same evening two prelates, Turner, Bishop of Ely, and Ken, Bishop of Bath and Wells, arrived at the Tower with a solemn message from the King. It was Monday night. On Wednesday morning Monmouth was to die.

He was greatly agitated. The blood left his cheeks; and it was some time before he could speak. Most of the short time which remained to him he wasted in vain attempts to obtain, if not a pardon, at least a respite. He wrote piteous letters to the King and to several courtiers, but in vain. Some Roman Catholic divines were sent to him from Whitehall. But they soon discovered that, though he would gladly have purchased his life by renouncing the religion of which he had professed himself in an especial manner the defender, yet, if he was to die, he would as soon die without their absolution as with it.†

* James to the Prince of Orange, July 14. 1685; Dutch despatch of the same date; Dartmouth's note on Burnet, i. 646.; Narcissus Luttrell's Diary. (1848.) A copy of this Diary, from July 1685 to Sept. 1690, is among the Mackintosh papers. To the rest I was allowed access by the kindness of the Warden of All Souls' College, where the original MS. is deposited. The Delegates of the Press of the University of Oxford have since published the whole, in six substantial volumes, which will, I am afraid, find little favour with readers who seek only for amusement, but which will always be useful as materials for history. (1857.)

† Buccleuch MS.; Life of James the Second, ii. 37. Orig. Mem.; Van Citters, July $\frac{14}{24}$. 1685; Gazette de France, August $\frac{1}{11}$.

Digitized by Google

Nor were Ken and Turner much better pleased with his frame of mind. The doctrine of nonresistance was, in their view, as in the view of most of their brethren, the distinguishing badge of the Anglican Church. The two Bishops insisted on Monmouth's owning that, in drawing the sword against the government, he had committed a great sin; and, on this point, they found him obstinately heterodox. Nor was this his only heresy. He maintained that his connection with Lady Wentworth was blameless in the sight of God. He had been married, he said, when a child. He had never cared for his Duchess. The happiness which he had not found at home he had sought in a round of loose amours, condemned by religion and morality. Henrietta had reclaimed him from a life of vice. To her he had been strictly constant. They had, by common consent, offered up fervent prayers for the divine guidance. After those prayers they had found their affection for each other strengthened; and they could then no longer doubt that, in the sight of God, they were a wedded pair. The Bishops were so much scandalised by this view of the conjugal relation that they refused to administer the sacrament to the prisoner. All that they could obtain from him was a promise that, during the single night which still remained to him, he would pray to be enlightened if he were in error.

On the Wednesday morning, at his particular request, Doctor Thomas Tenison, who then held the vicarage of Saint Martin's, and, in that important cure, had obtained the high esteem of the public, came to the Tower. From Tenison, whose opinions were known to be moderate, the Duke expected more indulgence than Ken and Turner were disposed to show. But Tenison, whatever might be his sentiments concerning nonresistance in the abstract, thought the late rebellion rash and wicked, and considered Monmouth's notion respecting marriage as a most dangerous delusion. Monmouth was obstinate.

Digitized by Google

He had prayed, he said, for the divine direction. His sentiments remained unchanged; and he could not doubt that they were correct. Tenison's exhortations were in a milder tone than those of the Bishops. But he, like them, thought that he should not be justified in administering the Eucharist to one whose penitence was of so unsatisfactory a nature.*

The hour drew near: all hope was over; and Monmouth had passed from pusillanimous fear to the apathy of despair. His children were brought to his room that he might take leave of them, and were followed by his wife. He spoke to her kindly, but without emotion. Though she was a woman of great strength of mind, and had little cause to love him, her misery was such that none of the bystanders could refrain from weeping. He alone was unmoved.†

His execution.

It was ten o'clock. The coach of the Lieutenant of the Tower was ready. Monmouth requested his spiritual advisers to accompany him to the place of execution; and they consented: but they told him that, in their judgment, he was about to die in a perilous state of mind, and that, if they attended him, it would be their duty to exhort him to the last. As he passed along the ranks of the guards he saluted them with a smile; and he mounted the scaffold with a firm tread. Tower Hill was covered up to the chimney tops with an innumerable multitude of gazers, who, in awful silence, broken only by sighs and the noise of weeping, listened for the last accents of the darling of the people. "I shall say little," he began. "I come here, not to speak, but to die. I die a Protestant of the Church of England." The Bishops interrupted him, and told him that, unless he acknowledged resistance to be sinful, he was no member of their church. He went on to speak of his Henrietta. She

* Buccleuch MS.; Life of James the Second, ii. 37, 38. Orig. Mem.; Burnet, i. 645.; Tenison's account in Kennet, iii. 432. Ed. 1719.

† Buccleuch MS.

Digitized by Google

was, he said, a young lady of virtue and honour. He loved her to the last, and he could not die without giving utterance to his feelings. The Bishops again interfered, and begged him not to use such language. Some altercation followed. The divines have been accused of dealing harshly with the dying man. But they appear to have only discharged what, in their view, was a sacred duty. Monmouth knew their principles, and, if he wished to avoid their importunity, should have dispensed with their attendance. Their general arguments against resistance had no effect on him. But when they reminded him of the ruin which he had brought on his brave and loving followers, of the blood which had been shed, of the souls which had been sent unprepared to the great account, he was touched, and said, in a softened voice, "I do own that. I am sorry that it ever happened." They prayed with him long and fervently; and he joined in their petitions till they invoked a blessing on the King. He remained silent. "Sir," said one of the Bishops, "do you not pray for the King with us?" Monmouth paused some time, and, after an internal struggle, exclaimed "Amen." But it was in vain that the prelates implored him to address to the soldiers and to the people a few words on the duty of obedience to the government. "I will make no speeches," he exclaimed. "Only ten words, my Lord." He turned away, called his servant, and put into the man's hand a toothpick case, the last token of ill starred love. "Give it," he said, "to that person." He then accosted John Ketch the executioner, a wretch who had butchered many brave and noble victims, and whose name has, during a century and a half, been vulgarly given to all who have succeeded him in his odious office.* "Here," said

* The name of Ketch was often associated with that of Jeffreys in the lampoons of those days.

"While Jeffreys on the bench, Ketch on the gibbet sits,"

says one poet. In the year which followed Monmouth's execution

Digitized by Google

the Duke, "are six guineas for you. Do not hack me as you did my Lord Russell. I have heard that you struck him three or four times. My servant will give you some more gold if you do the work well." He then undressed, felt the edge of the axe, expressed some fear that it was not sharp enough, and laid his head on the block. The divines in the meantime continued to ejaculate with great energy; "God accept your repentance! God accept your imperfect repentance!"

The hangman addressed himself to his office. But he had been disconcerted by what the Duke had said. The first blow inflicted only a slight wound. The Duke struggled, rose from the block, and looked reproachfully at the executioner. The head sank down once more. The stroke was repeated again and again; but still the neck was not severed, and the body continued to move. Yells of rage and horror rose from the crowd. Ketch flung down the axe with a curse. "I cannot do it," he said; "my heart fails me." "Take up the axe, man," cried the sheriff. "Fling him over the rails," roared the mob. At length the axe was taken up. Two more blows extinguished the last remains of life; but a knife was used to separate the head from the shoulders. The crowd was wrought up to such an ecstasy of rage that the executioner was in danger of being torn in pieces, and was conveyed away under a strong guard.*

In the meantime many handkerchiefs were dipped

Ketch was turned out of his office for insulting one of the Sheriffs, and was succeeded by a butcher named Rose. But in four months Rose himself was hanged at Tyburn, and Ketch was reinstated. Luttrell's Diary, January 20. and May 28. 1686. See a curious note by Dr. Grey, on Hudibras, part iii. canto ii. line 1534.

* Account of the execution of Monmouth, signed by the divines who attended him; Buccleuch MS.; Burnet, i. 646.; Van Citters, July $\frac{17}{27}$. 1685; Luttrell's Diary; Evelyn's Diary, July 15.; Barillon, July $\frac{15}{25}$.

Digitized by Google

in the Duke's blood; for by a large part of the multitude he was regarded as a martyr who had died for the Protestant religion. The head and body were placed in a coffin covered with black velvet, and were laid privately under the communion table of Saint Peter's Chapel in the Tower. Within four years the pavement of the chancel was again disturbed, and hard by the remains of Monmouth were laid the remains of Jeffreys. In truth there is no sadder spot on the earth than that little cemetery. Death is there associated, not, as in Westminster Abbey and Saint Paul's, with genius and virtue, with public veneration and imperishable renown; not, as in our humblest churches and churchyards, with everything that is most endearing in social and domestic charities; but with whatever is darkest in human nature and in human destiny, with the savage triumph of implacable enemies, with the inconstancy, the ingratitude, the cowardice of friends, with all the miseries of fallen greatness and of blighted fame. Thither have been carried, through successive ages, by the rude hands of gaolers, without one mourner following, the bleeding relics of men who had been the captains of armies, the leaders of parties, the oracles of senates, and the ornaments of courts. Thither was borne, before the window where Jane Grey was praying, the mangled corpse of Guilford Dudley. Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset, and Protector of the realm, reposes there by the brother whom he murdered. There has mouldered away the headless trunk of John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester and Cardinal of Saint Vitalis, a man worthy to have lived in a better age, and to have died in a better cause. There are laid John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland, Lord High Admiral, and Thomas Cromwell, Earl of Essex, Lord High Treasurer. There, too, is another Essex, on whom nature and fortune had lavished all their bounties in vain, and whom valour,

Digitized by Google

grace, genius, royal favour, popular applause, conducted to an early and ignominious doom. Not far off sleep two chiefs of the great house of Howard, Thomas, fourth Duke of Norfolk, and Philip, eleventh Earl of Arundel. Here and there, among the thick graves of unquiet and aspiring statesmen, lie more delicate sufferers; Margaret of Salisbury, the last of the proud name of Plantagenet, and those two fair Queens who perished by the jealous rage of Henry. Such was the dust with which the dust of Monmouth mingled.*

Yet a few months, and the quiet village of Toddington, in Bedfordshire, witnessed a still sadder funeral. Near that village stood an ancient and stately hall, the seat of the Wentworths. The transept of the parish church had long been their burial place. To that burial place, in the spring which followed the death of Monmouth, was borne the coffin of the young Baroness Wentworth of Nettlestede. Her family reared a sumptuous mausoleum over her remains: but a less costly memorial of her was long contemplated with far deeper interest. Her name, carved by the hand of him whom she loved too well, was, a few years ago, still discernible on a tree in the adjoining park.

His memory cherished by the common people.

It was not by Lady Wentworth alone that the memory of Monmouth was cherished with idolatrous fondness. His hold on the hearts of the people lasted till the generation which had seen him had passed away. Ribands, buckles, and other trifling articles of apparel which he had worn, were treasured up as precious relics by those who had fought under him at Sedgemoor. Old men who long survived him desired, when they were dying,

* I cannot refrain from expressing my disgust at the barbarous stupidity which has transformed this most interesting little church into the likeness of a meetinghouse in a manufacturing town.

Digitized by Google

that these trinkets might be buried with them. One button of gold thread which narrowly escaped this fate may still be seen at a house which overlooks the field of battle. Nay, such was the devotion of the people to their unhappy favourite that, in the face of the strongest evidence by which the fact of a death was ever verified, many continued to cherish a hope that he was still living, and that he would again appear in arms. A person, it was said, who was remarkably like Monmouth had sacrificed himself to save the Protestant hero. The vulgar long continued, at every important crisis, to whisper that the time was at hand, and that King Monmouth would soon show himself. In 1686, a knave who had pretended to be the Duke, and had levied contributions in several villages of Wiltshire, was apprehended, and whipped from Newgate to Tyburn. In 1698, when England had long enjoyed constitutional freedom under a new dynasty, the son of an innkeeper passed himself on the yeomanry of Sussex as their beloved Monmouth, and defrauded many who were by no means of the lowest class. Five hundred pounds were collected for him. The farmers provided him with a horse. Their wives sent him baskets of chickens and ducks, and were lavish, it was said, of favours of a more tender kind; for, in gallantry at least, the counterfeit was a not unworthy representative of the original. When this impostor was thrown into prison for his fraud, his followers maintained him in luxury. Several of them appeared at the bar to countenance him when he was tried at the Horsham assizes. So long did this delusion last that, when George the Third had been some years on the English throne, Voltaire thought it necessary gravely to confute the hypothesis that the man in the iron mask was the Duke of Monmouth.*

* Observator, August 1. 1685; Letter from Humphrey Wanley, dated Aug. 25. 1698, in the Autograph Collection; Gazette de France, Nov. 2. 1686;

Digitized by Google

It is, perhaps, a fact scarcely less remarkable that, to this day, the inhabitants of some parts of the West of England, when any bill affecting their interests is before the House of Lords, think themselves entitled to claim the help of the Duke of Buccleuch, the descendant of the unfortunate leader for whom their ancestors bled.

The history of Monmouth would alone suffice to refute the imputation of inconstancy which is so frequently thrown on the common people. The common people are sometimes inconstant; for they are human beings. But that they are inconstant as compared with the educated classes, with aristocracies, or with princes, may be confidently denied. It would be easy to name demagogues whose popularity has remained undiminished while sovereigns and parliaments have withdrawn their confidence from a long succession of statesmen. When Swift had survived his faculties many years, the Irish populace still continued to light bonfires on his birthday, in commemoration of the services which they fancied that he had rendered to his country when his mind was in full vigour. While seven administrations were raised to power and hurled from it in consequence of court intrigues or of changes in the sentiments of the higher classes of society, the profligate Wilkes retained his hold on the affections of a rabble whom he pillaged and ridiculed. Politicians, who, in 1807,

brey Collection; Voltaire, Dict. Phil. There are, in the Pepysian Collection, several ballads written after Monmouth's death, which represent him as living, and predict his speedy return. I will give two specimens:

"Though this is a dismal story
Of the fall of my design,
Yet I 'll come again in glory,
If I live till eighty-nine;
"For I 'll have a stronger army,
And of ammunition store."

Again:

"Then shall Monmouth in his glories
Unto his English friends appear,
And will stifle all such stories
As are vended everywhere.
"They 'll see I was not so degraded,
To be taken gathering pease,
Or in a cock of hay up braided.
What strange stories now are these!"

Digitized by Google

had sought to curry favour with George the Third by defending Caroline of Brunswick, were not ashamed, in 1820, to curry favour with George the Fourth by persecuting her. But in 1820, as in 1807, the whole body of working men was fanatically devoted to her cause. So it was with Monmouth. In 1680 he had been adored alike by the gentry and by the peasantry of the West. In 1685 he came again. To the gentry he had become an object of aversion: but by the peasantry he was still loved with a love strong as death, with a love not to be extinguished by misfortunes or faults, by the flight from Sedgemoor, by the letter from Ringwood, or by the tears and abject supplications at Whitehall. The charge which may with justice be brought against the common people is, not that they are inconstant, but that they almost invariably choose their favourite so ill that their constancy is a vice and not a virtue.

Cruelties of the soldiers in the West.

While the execution of Monmouth occupied the thoughts of the Londoners, the counties which had risen against the government were enduring all that a ferocious soldiery could inflict. Feversham had been summoned to the court, where honours and rewards which he little deserved awaited him. He was made a Knight of the Garter and Captain of the first and most lucrative troop of Life Guards: but Court and City laughed at his military exploits; and the wit of Buckingham gave forth its last feeble flash at the expense of the general who had won a battle in bed.* Feversham left in command at Bridgewater Colonel Percy Kirke, a military adventurer whose vices had been developed by the worst of all schools, Tangier. Kirke had during some years commanded the garrison of that town, and had been constantly

Kirke.

* London Gazette, August 3. 1685; the Battle of Sedgemoor, a Farce.

Digitized by Google

employed in hostilities against tribes of foreign barbarians, ignorant of the laws which regulate the warfare of civilised and Christian nations. Within the ramparts of his fortress he was a despotic prince. The only check on his tyranny was the fear of being called to account by a distant and a careless government. He might therefore safely proceed to the most audacious excesses of rapacity, licentiousness, and cruelty. He lived with boundless dissoluteness, and procured by extortion the means of indulgence. No goods could be sold till Kirke had had the refusal of them. No question of right could be decided till Kirke had been bribed. Once, merely from a malignant whim, he staved all the wine in a vintner's cellar. On another occasion he drove all the Jews from Tangier. Two of them he sent to the Spanish Inquisition, which forthwith burned them. Under this iron domination scarce a complaint was heard; for hatred was effectually kept down by terror. Two persons who had been refractory were found murdered; and it was universally believed that they had been slain by Kirke's order. When his soldiers displeased him he flogged them with merciless severity: but he indemnified them by permitting them to sleep on watch, to reel drunk about the streets, to rob, beat, and insult the merchants and the labourers.

When Tangier was abandoned, Kirke returned to England. He still continued to command his old soldiers, who were designated sometimes as the First Tangier Regiment, and sometimes as Queen Catharine's Regiment. As they had been levied for the purpose of waging war on an infidel nation, they bore on their flag a Christian emblem, the Paschal Lamb. In allusion to this device, and with a bitterly ironical meaning, these men, the rudest and most ferocious in the English army, were called Kirke's Lambs. The regiment, now the second of the line, still retains this ancient badge, which is however thrown into the shade

Digitized by Google

by decorations honourably earned in Egypt, in Spain, and in the heart of Asia.*

Such was the captain and such the soldiers who were now let loose on the people of Somersetshire. From Bridgewater Kirke marched to Taunton. He was accompanied by two carts filled with wounded rebels whose gashes had not been dressed, and by a long drove of prisoners on foot, who were chained two and two. Several of these he hanged as soon as he reached Taunton, without the form of a trial. They were not suffered even to take leave of their nearest relations. The signpost of the White Hart Inn served for a gallows. It is said that the work of death went on in sight of the windows where the officers of the Tangier regiment were carousing, and that at every health a wretch was turned off. When the legs of the dying men quivered in the last agony, the colonel ordered the drums to strike up. He would give the rebels, he said, music to their dancing. The tradition runs that one of the captives was not even allowed the indulgence of a speedy death. Twice he was suspended from the signpost, and twice cut down. Twice he was asked if he repented of his treason; and twice he replied that, if the thing were to do again, he would do it. Then he was tied up for the last time. So many dead bodies were quartered that the executioner stood ankle deep in blood. He was assisted by a poor man whose loyalty was suspected, and who was compelled to ransom his own life by seething the remains of his friends in pitch. The peasant who had consented to perform this hideous office afterwards returned to his plough. But a mark like that of Cain was upon him. He was known through his village by the horrible name of Tom Boilman. The rustics long continued to relate that, though he

* Pepys's Diary, kept at Tangier; Historical Records of the Second or Queen's Royal Regiment of Foot.

Digitized by Google

had, by his sinful and shameful deed, saved himself from the vengeance of the Lambs, he had not escaped the vengeance of a higher power. In a great storm he fled for shelter under an oak, and was there struck dead by lightning.*

The number of those who were thus butchered cannot now be ascertained. Nine were entered in the parish registers of Taunton: but those registers contain the names of such only as had Christian burial. Those who were hanged in chains, and those whose heads and limbs were sent to the neighbouring villages, must have been much more numerous. It was believed in London, at the time, that Kirke put a hundred captives to death during the week which followed the battle.†

Cruelty, however, was not this man's only passion. He loved money; and was no novice in the arts of extortion. A safe conduct might be bought of him for thirty or forty pounds; and such a safe conduct, though of no value in law, enabled the purchaser to pass the posts of the Lambs without molestation, to reach a seaport, and to fly to a foreign country. The ships which were bound for New England were crowded at this juncture with so many fugitives from Sedgemoor that there was great danger lest the water and provisions should fail.‡

Kirke was also, in his own coarse and ferocious way, a man of pleasure; and nothing is more probable than that he employed his power for the purpose of gratifying his licentious appetites. It was reported that he conquered the virtue of a beautiful woman by promising to spare the life of one to whom she was

* Bloody Assizes; Burnet, i. 647.; Luttrell's Diary, July 15. 1685; Locke's Western Rebellion; Toulmin's History of Taunton, edited by Savage.

† Luttrell's Diary, July 15. 1685; Toulmin's Hist. of Taunton.

‡ Oldmixon, 705.; Life and Errors of John Dunton, chap. vii.

Digitized by Google

strongly attached, and that, after she had yielded, he showed her suspended on the gallows the lifeless remains of him for whose sake she had sacrificed her honour. This tale an impartial judge must reject. It is unsupported by proof. The earliest authority for it is a poem written by Pomfret. The respectable historians of that age, while they speak with just severity of the crimes of Kirke, either omit all mention of this most atrocious crime, or mention it as a thing rumoured but not proved. Those who tell the story tell it with such variations as deprive it of all title to credit. Some lay the scene at Taunton, some at Exeter. Some make the heroine of the tale a maiden, some a married woman. The relation for whom the shameful ransom was paid is described by some as her father, by some as her brother, and by some as her husband. Lastly the story is one which, long before Kirke was born, had been told of many other oppressors, and had become a favourite theme of novelists and dramatists. Two politicians of the fifteenth century, Rhynsault, the favourite of Charles the Bold of Burgundy, and Oliver le Dain, the favourite of Lewis the Eleventh of France, had been accused of the same crime. Cintio had taken it for the subject of a romance. Whetstone had made out of Cintio's narrative the rude play of Promos and Cassandra; and Shakspeare had borrowed from Whetstone the plot of the noble tragicomedy of Measure for Measure. As Kirke was not the first, so he was not the last, to whom this excess of wickedness was popularly imputed. During the reaction which followed the Jacobin tyranny in France, a very similar charge was brought against Joseph Lebon, one of the most odious agents of the Committee of Public Safety, and, after enquiry, was admitted even by his prosecutors to be unfounded.*

* The silence of Whig writers as Oldmixon and the compilers so credulous and so malevolent of the Western Martyrology

Digitized by Google

The government was dissatisfied with Kirke, not on account of the barbarity with which he had treated his needy prisoners, but on account of the interested lenity which he had shown to rich delinquents.* He was soon recalled from the West. A less irregular and more cruel massacre was about to be perpetrated. The vengeance was deferred during some weeks. It was thought desirable that the Western Circuit should not begin till the other circuits had terminated. In the mean time the gaols of Somersetshire and Dorsetshire were filled with thousands of captives. The chief friend and protector of these unhappy men in their extremity was one who abhorred their religious and political opinions, one whose order they hated, and to whom they had done unprovoked wrong, Bishop Ken. That good prelate used all his influence to soften the gaolers, and retrenched from his own episcopal state that he might be able to make some addition to the coarse and scanty fare of those who had defaced his beloved Cathedral. His conduct on this occasion was of a piece with his whole life. His intellect was indeed darkened by many superstitions and prejudices: but his moral character, when impartially reviewed, sustains a comparison with any in ecclesiastical history, and seems to approach, as near as human

would alone seem to me to settle the question. It also deserves to be remarked that the story of Rhynsault is told by Steele in the Spectator, No. 491. Surely it is hardly possible to believe that, if a crime exactly resembling that of Rhynsault had been committed within living memory in England by an officer of James the Second, Steele, who was indiscreetly and unseasonably forward to display his Whiggism, would have made no allusion to that fact. For the case of Lebon, see the Moniteur, 4 Messidor, l'an 3.

* Sunderland to Kirke, July 14. and 28. 1685. "His Majesty," says Sunderland, "commands me to signify to you his dislike of these proceedings, and desires you to take care that no person concerned in the rebellion be at large." It is but just to add that, in the same letter, Kirke is blamed for allowing his soldiers to live at free quarter.

Digitized by Google

infirmity permits, to the ideal perfection of Christian virtue.*

His labour of love was of no long duration. A rapid and effectual gaol delivery was at hand. Early in September, Jeffreys, accompanied by four other judges, set out on that circuit of which the memory will last as long as our race and language. The officers who commanded the troops in the districts through which his course lay had orders to furnish him with whatever military aid he might require. His ferocious temper needed no spur; yet a spur was applied. The health and spirits of the Lord Keeper had given way. He had been deeply mortified by the coldness of the King and by the insolence of the Chief Justice, and could find little consolation in looking back on a life, not indeed blackened by any atrocious crime, but sullied by cowardice, selfishness, and servility. So deeply was the unhappy man humbled that, when he appeared for the last time in Westminster Hall, he took with him a nosegay to hide his face, because, as he afterwards owned, he could not bear the eyes of the bar and of the audience. The prospect of his approaching end seems to have inspired him with unwonted courage. He determined to discharge his conscience, requested an audience of the King, spoke earnestly of the dangers inseparable from violent and

Jeffreys sets out on the Western Circuit.

* I should be very glad if I could give credit to the popular story that Ken, immediately after the battle of Sedgemoor, represented to the chiefs of the royal army the illegality of military executions. He would, I doubt not, have exerted all his influence on the side of law and of mercy, if he had been present. But there is no trustworthy evidence that he was then in the West at all. Indeed what we know about his proceedings at this time amounts very nearly to proof of an *alibi*. It is certain from the Journals of the House of Lords that, on the Thursday before the battle, he was at Westminster: it is equally certain that, on the Monday after the battle, he was with Monmouth in the Tower; and, in that age, a journey from London to Bridgewater and back again was no light thing.

Digitized by Google

arbitrary counsels, and condemned the lawless cruelties which the soldiers had committed in Somersetshire. He soon after retired from London to die. He breathed his last a few days after the Judges set out for the West. It was immediately notified to Jeffreys that he might expect the Great Seal as the reward of faithful and vigorous service.*

Trial of Alice Lisle.

At Winchester the Chief Justice first opened his commission. Hampshire had not been the theatre of war; but many of the vanquished rebels had, like their leader, fled thither. Two of them, John Hickes, a Nonconformist divine, and Richard Nelthorpe, a lawyer who had been outlawed for taking part in the Rye House plot, had sought refuge at the house of Alice, widow of John Lisle. John Lisle had sate in the Long Parliament and in the High Court of Justice, had been a Commissioner of the Great Seal in the days of the Commonwealth, and had been created a Lord by Cromwell. The titles given by the Protector had not been recognised by any government which had ruled England since the downfall of his house; but they appear to have been often used in conversation even by Royalists. John Lisle's widow was therefore commonly known as the Lady Alice. She was related to many respectable, and to some noble, families; and she was generally esteemed even by the Tory gentlemen of her county. For it was well known to them that she had deeply regretted some violent acts in which her husband had borne a part, that she had shed bitter tears for Charles the First, and that she had protected and relieved many Cavaliers in their distress. The same womanly kindness, which had led her to befriend the Royalists in their time of trouble, would not suffer her to refuse a meal and a hiding place to the wretched men who now entreated

* North's Life of Guildford, 260. 263. 273.; Mackintosh's View of the Reign of James the Second, page 16. note; Letter of Jeffreys to Sunderland, Sept. 5. 1685.

Digitized by Google

her to protect them. She took them into her house, set meat and drink before them, and showed them where they might take rest. The next morning her dwelling was surrounded by soldiers. Strict search was made. Hickes was found concealed in the malt-house, and Nelthorpe in the chimney. If Lady Alice knew her guests to have been concerned in the insurrection, she was undoubtedly guilty of what in strictness was a capital crime. For the law of principal and accessory, as respects high treason, then was, and is to this day, in a state disgraceful to English jurisprudence. In cases of felony, a distinction, founded on justice and reason, is made between the principal and the accessory after the fact. He who conceals from justice one whom he knows to be a murderer is liable to punishment, but not to the punishment of murder. He, on the other hand, who shelters one whom he knows to be a traitor is, according to all our jurists, guilty of high treason. It is unnecessary to point out the absurdity and cruelty of a law which includes under the same definition, and visits with the same penalty, offences lying at the opposite extremes of the scale of guilt. The feeling which makes the most loyal subject shrink from the thought of giving up to a shameful death the rebel who, vanquished, hunted down, and in mortal agony, begs for a morsel of bread and a cup of water, may be a weakness: but it is surely a weakness very nearly allied to virtue, a weakness which, constituted as human beings are, we can hardly eradicate from the mind without eradicating many noble and benevolent sentiments. A wise and good ruler may not think it right to sanction this weakness; but he will generally connive at it, or punish it very tenderly. In no case will he treat it as a crime of the blackest dye. Whether Flora Macdonald was justified in concealing the attainted heir of the Stuarts, whether a brave soldier of our own time was justified in assisting the escape of Lavalette, are questions on

Digitized by Google

which casuists may differ: but to class such actions with the crimes of Guy Faux and Fieschi is an outrage to humanity and common sense. Such, however, is the classification of our law. It is evident that nothing but a lenient administration could make such a state of the law endurable. And it is just to say that, during many generations, no English government, save one, has treated with rigour persons guilty merely of harbouring defeated and flying insurgents. To women especially has been granted, by a kind of tacit prescription, the right of indulging, in the midst of havoc and vengeance, that compassion which is the most endearing of all their charms. Since the beginning of the great civil war, numerous rebels, some of them far more important than Hickes or Nelthorpe, have been protected from the severity of victorious governments by female adroitness and generosity. But no English ruler who has been thus baffled, the savage and implacable James alone excepted, has had the barbarity even to think of putting a lady to a cruel and shameful death for so venial and amiable a transgression.

Odious as the law was, it was strained for the purpose of destroying Alice Lisle. She could not, according to the doctrine laid down by the highest authority, be convicted till after the conviction of the rebels whom she had harboured.* She was, however, set to the bar before either Hickes or Nelthorpe had been tried. It was no easy matter in such a case to obtain a verdict for the crown. The witnesses prevaricated. The jury, consisting of the principal gentlemen of Hampshire, shrank from the thought of sending a fellow creature to the stake for conduct which seemed deserving rather of praise than of blame. Jeffreys was beside himself with fury. This

* See the preamble of the Act of Parliament reversing her attainder.

Digitized by Google

was the first case of treason on the circuit; and there seemed to be a strong probability that his prey would escape him. He stormed, cursed, and swore in language which no wellbred man would have used at a race or a cockfight. One witness named Dunne, partly from concern for Lady Alice, and partly from fright at the threats and maledictions of the Chief Justice, entirely lost his head, and at last stood silent. "Oh how hard the truth is," said Jeffreys, "to come out of a lying Presbyterian knave." The witness, after a pause of some minutes, stammered a few unmeaning words. "Was there ever," exclaimed the judge, with an oath, "was there ever such a villain on the face of the earth? Dost thou believe that there is a God? Dost thou believe in hell fire? Of all the witnesses that I ever met with I never saw thy fellow." Still the poor man, scared out of his senses, remained mute; and again Jeffreys burst forth. "I hope, gentlemen of the jury, that you take notice of the horrible carriage of this fellow. How can one help abhorring both these men and their religion? A Turk is a saint to such a fellow as this. A Pagan would be ashamed of such villany. Oh blessed Jesus! What a generation of vipers do we live among!" "I cannot tell what to say, my Lord," faltered Dunne. The judge again broke forth into a volley of oaths. "Was there ever," he cried, "such an impudent rascal? Hold the candle to him that we may see his brazen face. You, gentlemen, that are of counsel for the crown, see that an information for perjury be preferred against this fellow." After the witnesses had been thus handled, the Lady Alice was called on for her defence. She began by saying, what may possibly have been true, that, though she knew Hickes to be in trouble when she took him in, she did not know or suspect that he had been concerned in the rebellion. He was a divine, a man of peace. It had, therefore, never occurred to her that he could have

Digitized by Google

borne arms against the government; and she had supposed that he wished to conceal himself because warrants were out against him for field preaching. The Chief Justice began to storm. "But I will tell you. There is not one of those lying, snivelling, canting Presbyterians but, one way or another, had a hand in the rebellion. Presbytery has all manner of villany in it. Nothing but Presbytery could have made Dunne such a rogue. Show me a Presbyterian; and I'll show thee a lying knave." He summed up in the same style, declaimed during an hour against Whigs and Dissenters, and reminded the jury that the prisoner's husband had borne a part in the death of Charles the First, a fact which had not been proved by any testimony, and which, if it had been proved, would have been utterly irrelevant to the issue. The jury retired, and remained long in consultation. The judge grew impatient. He could not conceive, he said, how, in so plain a case, they should even have left the box. He sent a messenger to tell them that, if they did not instantly return, he would adjourn the court and lock them up all night. Thus put to the torture, they came, but came to say that they doubted whether the charge had been made out. Jeffreys expostulated with them vehemently, and, after another consultation, they gave a reluctant verdict of Guilty.

On the following morning sentence was pronounced. Jeffreys gave directions that Alice Lisle should be burned alive that very afternoon. This excess of barbarity moved the pity and indignation even of the class which was most devoted to the crown. The clergy of Winchester Cathedral remonstrated with the Chief Justice, who, brutal as he was, was not mad enough to risk a quarrel on such a subject with a body so much respected by the Tory party. He consented to put off the execution five days. During that time the friends of the prisoner besought James

Digitized by Google

to be merciful. Ladies of high rank interceded for her. Feversham, whose recent victory had increased his influence at court, and who, it is said, had been bribed to take the compassionate side, spoke in her favour. Clarendon, the King's brother in law, pleaded her cause. But all was vain. The utmost that could be obtained was that her sentence should be commuted from burning to beheading. She was put to death on a scaffold in the marketplace of Winchester, and underwent her fate with serene courage.*

In Hampshire Alice Lisle was the only victim: but, on the day following her execution, Jeffreys reached Dorchester, the principal town of the county in which Monmouth had landed; and the judicial massacre began. The court was hung, by order of the Chief Justice, with scarlet; and this innovation seemed to the multitude to indicate a bloody purpose. It was also rumoured that, when the clergyman who preached the assize sermon enforced the duty of mercy, the ferocious mouth of the Judge was distorted by an ominous grin. These things made men augur ill of what was to follow.† The Bloody Assizes.

More than three hundred prisoners were to be tried. The work seemed heavy; but Jeffreys had a contrivance for making it light. He let it be understood that the only chance of obtaining pardon or respite was to plead guilty. Twenty nine persons, who put themselves on their country and were convicted, were ordered to be tied up without delay. The remaining prisoners pleaded guilty by scores. Two hundred and ninety two received sentence of death. The whole number hanged in Dorsetshire amounted to seventy four.

From Dorchester Jeffreys proceeded to Exeter.

* Trial of Alice Lisle in the Collection of State Trials; Act of the First of William and Mary for annulling and making void the Attainder of Alice Lisle, widow; Burnet, i. 649.; Caveat against the Whigs.

† Bloody Assizes.

Digitized by Google

The civil war had barely grazed the frontier of Devonshire. Here, therefore, comparatively few persons were capitally punished. Somersetshire, the chief seat of the rebellion, had been reserved for the last and most fearful vengeance. In this county two hundred and thirty three prisoners were in a few days hanged, drawn, and quartered. At every spot where two roads met, on every marketplace, on the green of every large village which had furnished Monmouth with soldiers, ironed corpses clattering in the wind, or heads and quarters stuck on poles, poisoned the air, and made the traveller sick with horror. In many parishes the peasantry could not assemble in the house of God without seeing the ghastly face of a neighbour grinning at them over the porch. The Chief Justice was all himself. His spirits rose higher and higher as the work went on. He laughed, shouted, joked, and swore in such a way that many thought him drunk from morning to night. But in him it was not easy to distinguish the madness produced by evil passions from the madness produced by brandy. A prisoner affirmed that the witnesses who appeared against him were not entitled to credit. One of them, he said, was a Papist, and another a prostitute. "Thou impudent rebel," exclaimed the Judge, "to reflect on the King's evidence! I see thee, villain, I see thee already with the halter round thy neck." Another produced testimony that he was a good Protestant. "Protestant!" said Jeffreys; "you mean Presbyterian. I'll hold you a wager of it. I can smell a Presbyterian forty miles." One wretched man moved the pity even of bitter Tories. "My Lord," they said, "this poor creature is on the parish." "Do not trouble yourselves," said the Judge, "I will ease the parish of the burden." It was not only against the prisoners that his fury broke forth. Gentlemen and noblemen of high consideration and stainless loyalty, who ventured to bring to his notice any extenuating circum-

Digitized by Google

stance, were almost sure to receive what he called, in the coarse dialect which he had learned in the pothouses of Whitechapel, a lick with the rough side of his tongue. Lord Stawell, a Tory peer, who could not conceal his horror at the remorseless manner in which his poor neighbours were butchered, was punished by having a corpse suspended in chains at his park gate.* In such spectacles originated many tales of terror, which were long told over the cider by the Christmas fires of the farmers of Somersetshire. Within the last forty years, peasants, in some districts, well knew the accursed spots, and passed them unwillingly after sunset.†

Jeffreys boasted that he had hanged more traitors than all his predecessors together since the Conquest. It is certain that the number of persons whom he put to death in one month, and in one shire, very much exceeded the number of all the political offenders who have been put to death in our island since the Revolution. The rebellions of 1715 and 1745 were of longer duration, of wider extent, and of more formidable aspect than that which was put down at Sedgemoor. It has not been generally thought that, either after the rebellion of 1715, or after the rebellion of 1745, the House of Hanover erred on the side of clemency. Yet all the executions of 1715 and 1745 added together will appear to have been few indeed when compared with those which disgraced the Bloody Assizes. The number of the rebels whom Jeffreys hanged on this circuit was three hundred and twenty. ‡

* Locke's Western Rebellion.

† This I can attest from my own childish recollections.

‡ Lord Lonsdale says seven hundred; Burnet six hundred. I have followed the list which the Judges sent to the Treasury, and which may still be seen there in the letter book of 1685. See the Bloody Assizes; Locke's Western Rebellion; the Panegyric on Lord Jeffreys; Burnet, i. 648.; Eachard, iii. 775.; Oldmixon, 705.

Digitized by Google

Such havoc must have excited disgust even if the sufferers had been generally odious. But they were, for the most part, men of blameless life, and of high religious profession. They were regarded by themselves, and by a large proportion of their neighbours, not as wrongdoers, but as martyrs who sealed with blood the truth of the Protestant religion. Very few of the convicts professed any repentance for what they had done. Many, animated by the old Puritan spirit, met death, not merely with fortitude, but with exultation. It was in vain that the ministers of the Established Church lectured them on the guilt of rebellion and on the importance of priestly absolution. The claim of the King to unbounded authority in things temporal, and the claim of the clergy to the spiritual power of binding and loosing, moved the bitter scorn of the intrepid sectaries. Some of them composed hymns in the dungeon, and chaunted them on the fatal sledge. Christ, they sang while they were undressing for the butchery, would soon come to rescue Zion and to make war on Babylon, would set up his standard, would blow his trumpet, and would requite his foes tenfold for all the evil which had been inflicted on his servants. The dying words of these men were noted down: their farewell letters were kept as treasures; and, in this way, with the help of some invention and exaggeration, was formed a copious supplement to the Marian martyrology.*

Abraham Holmes.

A few cases deserve special mention. Abraham Holmes, a retired officer of the parliamentary army, and one of those zealots who would own no king but King Jesus, had been taken at Sedgemoor. His arm had been frightfully mangled and shattered in the battle; and, as no surgeon was at hand, the stout old soldier amputated

* Some of the prayers, exhortations, and hymns of the sufferers will be found in the Bloody Assizes.

Digitized by Google

it himself. He was carried up to London, and examined by the King in Council, but would make no submission. "I am an aged man," he said; "and what remains to me of life is not worth a falsehood or a baseness. I have always been a republican; and I am so still." He was sent back to the West and hanged. The people remarked with awe and wonder that the beasts which were to drag him to the gallows became restive and went back. Holmes himself doubted not that the Angel of the Lord, as in the old time, stood in the way sword in hand, invisible to human eyes, but visible to the inferior animals. "Stop, gentlemen," he cried: "let me go on foot. There is more in this than you think. Remember how the ass saw him whom the prophet could not see." He walked manfully to the gallows, harangued the people with a smile, prayed fervently that God would hasten the downfall of Antichrist and the deliverance of England, and went up the ladder with an apology for mounting so awkwardly. "You see," he said, "I have but one arm."*

Christopher Battiscombe.

Not less courageously died Christopher Battiscombe, a young Templar of good family and fortune, who, at Dorchester, an agreeable provincial town proud of its taste and refinement, was regarded by all as the model of a fine gentleman. Great interest was made to save him. It was believed through the West of England that he was engaged to a young lady of gentle blood, the sister of the Sheriff, that she threw herself at the feet of Jeffreys to beg for mercy, and that Jeffreys drove her from him with a jest so hideous that to repeat it would be an offence against decency and

* Bloody Assizes; Locke's Western Rebellion; Lord Lonsdale's Memoirs; Account of the Battle of Sedgemoor in the Hardwicke Papers. The story in the Life of James the Second, ii. 43., is not taken from the King's manuscripts, and sufficiently refutes itself.

Digitized by Google

humanity. Her lover suffered at Lyme piously and courageously.*

The Hewlings.

A still deeper interest was excited by the fate of two gallant brothers, William and Benjamin Hewling. They were young, handsome, accomplished, and well connected. Their maternal grandfather was named Kiffin. He was one of the first merchants in London, and was generally considered as the head of the Baptists. The Chief Justice behaved to William Hewling on the trial with characteristic brutality. "You have a grandfather," he said, "who deserves to be hanged as richly as you." The poor lad, who was only nineteen, suffered death with so much meekness and fortitude, that an officer of the army who attended the execution, and who had made himself remarkable by rudeness and severity, was strangely melted, and said, "I do not believe that my Lord Chief Justice himself could be proof against this." Hopes were entertained that Benjamin would be pardoned. One victim of tender years was surely enough for one house to furnish. Even Jeffreys was, or pretended to be, inclined to lenity. The truth was that one of his kinsmen, from whom he had large expectations, and whom, therefore, he could not treat as he generally treated intercessors, pleaded strongly for the afflicted family. Time was allowed for a reference to London. The sister of the prisoner went to Whitehall with a petition. Many courtiers wished her success; and Churchill, among whose numerous faults cruelty had no place, obtained admittance for her. "I wish well to your suit with all my heart," he said, as they stood together in the antechamber; "but do not flatter yourself with hopes. This marble,"—and he laid his hand on the chimneypiece,—"is not harder than the

* Bloody Assizes; Locke's Western Rebellion; Humble Petition of Widows and fatherless Children in the West of England; Panegyric on Lord Jeffreys.

Digitized by Google

King." The prediction proved true. James was inexorable. Benjamin Hewling died with dauntless courage, amidst lamentations in which the soldiers who kept guard round the gallows could not refrain from joining.*

Yet those rebels who were doomed to death were less to be pitied than some of the survivors. Several prisoners to whom Jeffreys was unable to bring home the charge of high treason were convicted of misdemeanours, and were sentenced to scourging not less terrible than that which Oates had undergone. A woman for some idle words, such as had been uttered by half the women in the districts where the war had raged, was condemned to be whipped through all the market towns in the county of Dorset. She suffered part of her punishment before Jeffreys returned to London; but, when he was no longer in the West, the gaolers, with the humane connivance of the magistrates, took on themselves the responsibility of sparing her any further torture. A still more frightful sentence was passed on a lad named Tutchin, who was tried for seditious words. He was, as usual, interrupted in his defence by ribaldry and scurrility from the judgment seat. "You are a rebel; and all your family have been rebels since Adam. They tell me that you are a poet. I'll cap verses with you." The sentence was that the boy should be imprisoned seven years, and should, during that period, be flogged through every market town in Dorsetshire every year. The women in the galleries burst into tears. The clerk of the arraigns stood up in great disorder. "My Lord," said he,

Punishment of Tutchin.

* As to the Hewlings, I have followed Kiffin's Memoirs, and Mr. Hewling Luson's narrative, which will be found in the second edition of the Hughes Correspondence, vol. ii. Appendix. The accounts in Locke's Western Rebellion and in the Panegyric on Jeffreys are full of errors. Great part of the account in the Bloody Assizes was written by Kiffin, and agrees word for word with his Memoirs.

Digitized by Google

"the prisoner is very young. There are many market towns in our county. The sentence amounts to whipping once a fortnight, for seven years." "If he is a young man," said Jeffreys, "he is an old rogue. Ladies, you do not know the villain as well as I do. The punishment is not half bad enough for him. All the interest in England shall not alter it." Tutchin in his despair petitioned, and probably with sincerity, that he might be hanged. Fortunately for him he was, just at this conjuncture, taken ill of the small-pox and given over. As it seemed highly improbable that the sentence would ever be executed, the Chief Justice consented to remit it, in return for a bribe which reduced the prisoner to poverty. The temper of Tutchin, not originally very mild, was exasperated to madness by what he had undergone. He lived to be known as one of the most acrimonious and pertinacious enemies of the House of Stuart and of the Tory party.*

Rebels transported.

The number of prisoners whom Jeffreys transported was eight hundred and forty one. These men, more wretched than their associates who suffered death, were distributed into gangs, and bestowed on persons who enjoyed favour at court. The conditions of the gift were that the convicts should be carried beyond sea as slaves, that they should not be emancipated for ten years, and that the place of their banishment should be some West Indian island. This last article was studiously framed for the purpose of aggravating the misery of the exiles. In New England or New Jersey they would have found a population kindly disposed to them and a climate not unfavourable to their health and vigour. It was therefore determined that they should be sent to colonies where a Puritan could hope to inspire little sympathy, and where a labourer born in the

* See Tutchin's account of his own case in the Bloody Assizes.

Digitized by Google

temperate zone could hope to enjoy little health. Such was the state of the slave market that these bondmen, long as was the passage, and sickly as they were likely to prove, were still very valuable. It was estimated by Jeffreys that, on an average, each of them, after all charges were paid, would be worth from ten to fifteen pounds. There was therefore much angry competition for grants. Some Tories in the West conceived that they had, by their exertions and sufferings during the insurrection, earned a right to share in the profits which had been eagerly snatched up by the sycophants of Whitehall. The courtiers, however, were victorious.*

The misery of the exiles fully equalled that of the negroes who are now carried from Congo to Brazil. It appears from the best information which is at present accessible that more than one fifth of those who were shipped were flung to the sharks before the end of the voyage. The human cargoes were stowed close in the holds of small vessels. So little space was allowed that the wretches, many of whom were still tormented by unhealed wounds, could not all lie down at once without lying on one another. They were never suffered to go on deck. The hatchway was constantly watched by sentinels armed with hangers and blunderbusses. In the dungeon below all was darkness, stench, lamentation, disease and death. Of ninety nine convicts who were carried out in one vessel, twenty two died before they reached Jamaica, although the voyage was performed with unusual speed. The survivors when they arrived at their house of bondage were mere skeletons. During some weeks coarse biscuit and fetid water had been doled out to them in such scanty measure that any one of them could easily have consumed the ration

* Sunderland to Jeffreys, Sept. 14. 1685; Jeffreys to the King, Sept. 19. 1685, in the State Paper Office.

Digitized by Google

which was assigned to five. They were, therefore, in such a state that the merchant to whom they had been consigned found it expedient to fatten them before selling them.*

Confiscation and extortion.

Meanwhile the property both of the rebels who had suffered death, and of those more unfortunate men who were withering under the tropical sun, was fought for and torn in pieces by a crowd of greedy informers. By law a subject attainted of treason forfeits all his substance; and this law was enforced after the Bloody Assizes with a rigour at once cruel and ludicrous. The broken-hearted widows and destitute orphans of the labouring men whose corpses hung at the cross roads were called upon by the agents of the Treasury to explain what had become of a basket, of a goose, of a flitch of bacon, of a keg of cider, of a sack of beans, of a truss of hay.† While the humbler retainers of the government were pillaging the families of the slaughtered peasants, the Chief Justice was fast accumulating a fortune out of the plunder of a higher class of Whigs. He traded largely in pardons. His most lucrative transaction of this kind was with a gentleman named Edmund Prideaux. It is certain that Prideaux had not been in arms against the government; and it is probable that his only crime was the wealth which he had inherited from his father, an eminent lawyer who had been high in office under the Protector. No exertions were spared to make out a case for the crown. Mercy was offered to some

* The best account of the sufferings of those rebels who were sentenced to transportation is to be found in a very curious narrative written by John Coad, an honest, Godfearing carpenter who joined Monmouth, was badly wounded at Philip's Norton, was tried by Jeffreys, and was sent to Jamaica. The original manuscript was kindly lent to me by Mr. Phippard, to whom it belongs.

† In the Treasury records of the autumn of 1685 are several letters directing search to be made for trifles of this sort.

Digitized by Google

prisoners on condition that they would bear evidence against Prideaux. The unfortunate man lay long in gaol, and at length, overcome by fear of the gallows, consented to pay fifteen thousand pounds for his liberation. This great sum was received by Jeffreys. He bought with it an estate, to which the people gave the name of Aceldama, from that accursed field which was purchased with the price of innocent blood.*

He was ably assisted in the work of extortion by the crew of parasites who were in the habit of drinking and laughing with him. The office of these men was to drive hard bargains with convicts under the strong terrors of death, and with parents trembling for the lives of children. A portion of the spoil was abandoned by Jeffreys to his agents. To one of his boon companions, it is said, he tossed a pardon for a rich traitor across the table during a revel. It was not safe to have recourse to any intercession except that of his creatures; for he guarded his profitable monopoly of mercy with jealous care. It was even suspected that he sent some persons to the gibbet solely because they had applied for the royal clemency through channels independent of him.†

Rapacity of the Queen and of her ladies.

Some courtiers nevertheless contrived to obtain a small share of this traffic. The ladies of the Queen's household distinguished themselves preeminently by rapacity and hard-heartedness. Part of the disgrace which they incurred falls on their mistress: for it was solely on account of the relation in which they stood to her that they were able to enrich themselves by so odious a trade; and there can be no question that she might with a word or a look have restrained them. But in truth

* Commons' Journals, Oct. 9., Nov. 10., Dec. 26. 1690; Oldmixon, 706.; Panegyric on Jeffreys.

† Life and Death of Lord Jeffreys; Panegyric on Jeffreys; Kiffin's Memoirs.

Digitized by Google

she encouraged them by her evil example, if not by her express approbation. She seems to have been one of that large class of persons who bear adversity better than prosperity. While her husband was a subject and an exile, shut out from public employment, and in imminent danger of being deprived of his birthright, the suavity and humility of her manners conciliated the kindness even of those who most abhorred her religion. But when her good fortune came her good nature disappeared. The meek and affable Duchess turned out an ungracious and haughty Queen.* The misfortunes which she subsequently endured have made her an object of some interest; but that interest would be not a little heightened if it could be shown that, in the season of her greatness, she saved, or even tried to save, one single victim from the most frightful proscription that England has ever seen. Unhappily the only request that she is known to have preferred touching the rebels was that a hundred of those who were sentenced to transportation might be given to her.† The profit which she cleared on the cargo, after making large allowance for those who died of hunger and fever during the passage, cannot be estimated at less than a thousand guineas. We cannot wonder that her attendants should have imitated her unprincely greediness and her unwomanly cruelty. They exacted a thousand pounds from Roger Hoare, a merchant of Bridgewater, who had contributed to the military chest of the rebel army. But the prey on which they pounced most eagerly was one which it might have been thought that even the most ungentle natures would have spared. Already some of the girls who had presented the stan-

* Burnet, i. 368.; Evelyn's Diary, Feb. 4. 168½, July 13. 1686. In one of the satires of that time are these lines:

"When Duchess, she was gentle, mild, and civil;
When Queen, she proved a raging furious devil."

† Sunderland to Jeffreys, Sept. 14. 1685.

Digitized by Google

dard to Monmouth at Taunton had cruelly expiated their offence. One of them had been thrown into a prison where an infectious malady was raging. She had sickened and died there. Another had presented herself at the bar before Jeffreys to beg for mercy. "Take her, gaoler," vociferated the Judge, with one of those frowns which had often struck terror into stouter hearts than hers. She burst into tears, drew her hood over her face, followed the gaoler out of court, fell ill of fright, and in a few hours was a corpse. Most of the young ladies, however, who had walked in the procession, were still alive. Some of them were under ten years of age. All had acted under the orders of their schoolmistress, without knowing that they were committing a crime. The Queen's maids of honour asked the royal permission to wring money out of the parents of the poor children; and the permission was granted. An order was sent down to Taunton that all these little girls should be seized and imprisoned. Sir Francis Warre of Hestercombe, the Tory member for Bridgewater, was requested to undertake the office of exacting the ransom. He was charged to declare in strong language that the maids of honour would not endure delay, that they were determined to prosecute to outlawry, unless a reasonable sum were forthcoming, and that by a reasonable sum was meant seven thousand pounds. Warre excused himself from taking any part in a transaction so scandalous. The maids of honour then requested William Penn to act for them; and Penn accepted the commission. Yet it should seem that a little of the pertinacious scrupulosity which he had often shown about taking off his hat would not have been altogether out of place on this occasion. He probably silenced the remonstrances of his conscience by repeating to himself that none of the money which he extorted would go into his own pocket; that if he refused to be the agent of the

Digitized by Google

ladies they would find agents less humane; that by complying he should increase his influence at the court, and that his influence at the court had already enabled him, and might still enable him, to render great services to his oppressed brethren. The maids of honour were at last forced to content themselves with less than a third part of what they had demanded.*

* Locke's Western Rebellion; Toulmin's History of Taunton, edited by Savage; Letter of the Duke of Somerset to Sir F. Warre; Letter of Sunderland to Penn, Feb. 13. 168⅘, from the State Paper Office, in the Mackintosh Collection. (1848.)

The letter of Sunderland is as follows:—

"Whitehall, Feb. 13. 1685-6.

"Mr. Penne,

"Her Majesty's Maids of Honour having acquainted me that they designe to employ you and Mr. Walden in making a composition with the Relations of the Maids of Taunton for the high Misdemeanour they have been guilty of, I do at their request hereby let you know that His Majesty has been pleased to give their Fines to the said Maids of Honour, and therefore recommend it to Mr. Walden and you to make the most advantageous composition you can in their behalfe.

"I am, Sir,
"Your humble servant,
"SUNDERLAND."

That the person to whom this letter was addressed was William Penn the Quaker was not doubted by Sir James Mackintosh who first brought it to light, or, as far as I am aware, by any other person, till after the publication of the first part of this History. It has since been confidently asserted that the letter was addressed to a certain George Penne, who appears from an old account book lately discovered to have been concerned in a negotiation for the ransom of one of Monmouth's followers, named Azariah Pinney.

If I thought that I had committed an error, I should, I hope, have the honesty to acknowledge it. But, after full consideration, I am satisfied that Sunderland's letter was addressed to William Penn.

Much has been said about the way in which the name is spelt. The Quaker, we are told, was not Mr. Penne, but Mr. Penn. I feel assured that no person conversant with the books and manuscripts of the seventeenth century will attach any importance to this argument. It is notorious that a proper name was then thought to be well spelt if the sound were preserved. To go no further than the persons who, in Penn's time, held the Great Seal, one of them is sometimes Hyde and sometimes Hide: another is Jefferies, Jeffries, Jeffereys, and Jeffreys: a third is Somers, Sommers, and Summers: a fourth is Wright and Wrighto; and a fifth is Cow-

Digitized by Google

No English sovereign has ever given stronger proofs of a cruel nature than James the Second. Yet his cruelty was not more odious than his mercy. Or perhaps it may be more correct to say that his mercy and his cruelty were such that each reflects infamy on the other. Our horror at the fate of the simple clowns, the young lads, the delicate women, to whom he was inexorably severe, is increased when we find

per and Cooper. The Quaker's name was spelt in three ways. He, and his father the Admiral before him, invariably, as far as I have observed, spelt it Penn: but most people spelt it Pen; and there were some who adhered to the ancient form, Penne. For example, William the father is Penne in a letter from Disbrowe to Thurloe, dated on the 7th of December 1654; and William the son is Penne in a newsletter of the 22nd of September 1688, printed in the Ellis Correspondence. In Richard Ward's Life and Letters of Henry More, printed in 1710, the name of the Quaker will be found spelt in all the three ways, Penn in the index, Pen in page 197., and Penne in page 311. The name is Penne in the Commission which the Admiral carried out with him on his expedition to the West Indies. Burchett, who became Secretary to the Admiralty soon after the Revolution, and remained in office long after the accession of the House of Hanover, always, in his Naval History, wrote the name Penne. Surely it cannot be thought strange that an old-fashioned spelling, in which the Secretary of the Admiralty persisted so late as 1720, should have been used at the office of the Secretary of State in 1686. I am quite confident that, if the letter which we are considering had been of a different kind, if Mr. Penne had been informed that, in consequence of his earnest intercession, the King had been graciously pleased to grant a free pardon to the Taunton girls, and if I had attempted to deprive the Quaker of the credit of that intercession on the ground that his name was not Penne, the very persons who now complain so bitterly that I am unjust to his memory would have complained quite as bitterly, and, I must say, with much more reason.

I think myself, therefore, perfectly justified in considering the names, Penn and Penne, as the same. To which, then, of the two persons who bore that name, George or William, is it probable that the letter of the Secretary of State was addressed?

George was evidently an adventurer of a very low class. All that we learn about him from the papers of the Pinney family is that he was employed in the purchase of a pardon for the younger son of a dissenting minister. The whole sum which appears to have passed through George's hands on this occasion was sixty five pounds. His commission on the transaction must therefore have been small. The only other information which we have about him is that he, some

Digitized by Google

to whom and for what considerations he granted his pardon.

The rule by which a prince ought, after a rebellion, to be guided in selecting rebels for punishment is perfectly obvious. The ringleaders, the men of rank, fortune and education, whose power and whose arti-

time later, applied to the government for a favour which was very far from being an honour. In England the Groom Porter of the Palace had a jurisdiction over games of chance, and made some very dirty gain by issuing lottery tickets and licensing hazard tables. George appears to have petitioned for a similar privilege in the American colonies.

William Penn was, during the reign of James the Second, the most active and powerful solicitor about the Court. I will quote the words of his admirer Croese. "Quum autem Pennus tanta gratia plurimum apud regem valeret, et per id perplures sibi amicos acquireret, illum omnes, etiam qui modo aliqua notitia erant conjuncti, quoties aliquid a rege postulandum agendumve apud regem esset, adire, ambire, orare, ut eos apud regem adjuvaret." He was overwhelmed by business of this kind, "obrutus negotiationibus curationibusque." His house and the approaches to it were every day blocked up by crowds of persons who came to request his good offices; "domus ac vestibula quotidie referta clientium et supplicantium." From the Fountainhall papers it appears that his influence was felt even in the highlands of Scotland. We learn from himself that, at this time, he was always toiling for others, that he was a daily suitor at Whitehall, and that, if he had chosen to sell his influence, he could, in little more than three years, have put twenty thousand pounds into his pocket, and obtained a hundred thousand more for the improvement of the colony of which he was proprietor.

Such was the position of these two men. Which of them, then, was the more likely to be employed in the matter to which Sunderland's letter related? Was it George or William, an agent of the lowest or of the highest class? The persons interested were ladies of rank and fashion, resident at the palace, where George would hardly have been admitted into an outer room, but where William was every day in the presence chamber and was frequently called into the closet. The greatest nobles in the kingdom were zealous and active in the cause of their fair friends, nobles with whom William lived in habits of familiar intercourse, but who would hardly have thought George fit company for their grooms. The sum in question was seven thousand pounds, a sum not large when compared with the masses of wealth with which William had constantly to deal, but more than a hundred times as large as the only ransom which is known to have passed through the hands of George. These considerations would suffice to raise a strong presumption that Sunderland's letter was addressed to William, and not to George: but there is

Digitized by Google

fices have led the multitude into error, are the proper objects of severity. The deluded populace, when once the slaughter on the field of battle is over, can scarcely be treated too leniently. This rule, so evidently agreeable to justice and humanity, was not only not observed: it was inverted. While those

a still stronger argument behind.

It is most important to observe that the person to whom this letter was addressed was not the first person whom the Maids of Honour had requested to act for them. They applied to him, because another person, to whom they had previously applied, had, after some correspondence, declined the office. From their first application we learn with certainty what sort of person they wished to employ. If their first application had been made to some obscure pettifogger or needy gambler, we should be warranted in believing that the Penne to whom their second application was made was George. If, on the other hand, their first application was made to a gentleman of the highest consideration, we can hardly be wrong in saying that the Penne to whom their second application was made must have been William. To whom, then, was their first application made? It was to Sir Francis Warre of Hestercombe, a Baronet and a Member of Parliament. The letters are still extant in which the Duke of Somerset, the proud Duke, not a man very likely to have corresponded with George Penne, pressed Sir Francis to undertake the commission. The latest of those letters is dated about three weeks before Sunderland's letter to Mr. Penne. Somerset tells Sir Francis that the town clerk of Bridgewater, whose name, I may remark in passing, is spelt sometimes Bird and sometimes Birde, had offered his services, but that those services had been declined. It is clear, therefore, that the Maids of Honour were desirous to have an agent of high station and character. And they were right. For the sum which they demanded was so large that no ordinary jobber could safely be entrusted with the care of their interests.

As Sir Francis Warre excused himself from undertaking the negotiation, it became necessary for the Maids of Honour and their advisers to choose somebody who might supply his place; and they chose Penne. Which of the two Pennes, then, must have been their choice, George, a petty broker to whom a percentage on sixty five pounds was an object, and whose highest ambition was to derive an infamous livelihood from cards and dice, or William, not inferior in social position to any commoner in the kingdom? Is it possible to believe that the ladies who, in January, employed the Duke of Somerset to procure for them an agent in the first rank of the English gentry, and who did not think an attorney, though occupying a respectable post in a respectable corporation, good enough for their purpose, would, in February, have resolved to

Digitized by Google

who ought to have been spared were slaughtered by hundreds, the few who might with propriety have been left to the utmost rigour of the law were spared. This eccentric clemency has perplexed some writers, and has drawn forth ludicrous eulogies from others. It was neither at all mysterious nor at all praise-

trust everything to a fellow who was as much below Bird as Bird was below Warre?

But, it is said, Sunderland's letter is dry and distant; and he never would have written in such a style to William Penn with whom he was on friendly terms. Can it be necessary for me to reply that the official communications which a Minister of State makes to his dearest friends and nearest relations are as cold and formal as those which he makes to strangers? Will it be contended that the General Wellesley, to whom the Marquess Wellesley, when Governor of India, addressed so many letters beginning with "Sir," and ending with "I have the honour to be your obedient servant," cannot possibly have been his Lordship's brother Arthur?

But, it is said, Oldmixon tells a different story. According to him, a Popish lawyer, named Brent, and a subordinate jobber, named Crane, were the agents in the matter of the Taunton girls. Now it is notorious that of all our historians Oldmixon is the least trustworthy. His most positive assertion would be of no value when opposed to such evidence as is furnished by Sunderland's letter. But Oldmixon asserts nothing positively. Not only does he not assert positively that Brent and Crane acted for the Maids of Honour; but he does not even assert positively that the Maids of Honour were at all concerned. He goes no further than "It was said," and "It was reported." It is plain therefore that he was very imperfectly informed. I do not think it impossible, however, that there may have been some foundation for the rumour which he mentions. We have seen that one busy lawyer, named Bird, volunteered to look after the interest of the Maids of Honour, and that they were forced to tell him that they did not want his services. Other persons, and among them the two whom Oldmixon names, may have tried to thrust themselves into so lucrative a job, and may, by pretending to interest at Court, have succeeded in obtaining a little money from terrified families. But nothing can be more clear than that the authorised agent of the Maids of Honour was the Mr. Penne to whom the Secretary of State wrote; and I firmly believe that Mr. Penne to have been William the Quaker.

If it be said that it is incredible that so good a man would have been concerned in so bad an affair, I can only answer that this affair was very far indeed from being the worst in which he was concerned.

For these reasons I leave the text, and shall leave it, exactly as it originally stood. (1857.)

Digitized by Google

worthy. It may be distinctly traced in every case either to a sordid or to a malignant motive, either to thirst for money or to thirst for blood.

In the case of Grey there was no mitigating circumstance. His parts and knowledge, the rank which he had inherited in the state, and the high command which he had borne in the rebel army, would have pointed him out to a just government as a much fitter object of punishment than Alice Lisle, than William Hewling, than any of the hundreds of ignorant peasants whose skulls and quarters were exposed in Somersetshire. But Grey's estate was large and was strictly entailed. He had only a life interest in his property; and he could forfeit no more interest than he had. If he died, his lands at once devolved on the next heir. If he were pardoned, he would be able to pay a large ransom. He was therefore suffered to redeem himself by giving a bond for forty thousand pounds to the Lord Treasurer, and smaller sums to other courtiers.* Grey.

Sir John Cochrane had held among the Scotch rebels the same rank which had been held by Grey in the West of England. That Cochrane should be forgiven by a prince vindictive beyond all example, seemed incredible. But Cochrane was the younger son of a rich family; it was therefore only by sparing him that money could be made out of him. His father, Lord Dundonald, offered a bribe of five thousand pounds to the priests of the royal household; and a pardon was granted.† Cochrane.

Samuel Storey, a noted sower of sedition, who had been Commissary to the rebel army, and who had inflamed the ignorant populace of Somersetshire by vehement harangues in which James had been described as an incendiary and a Storey.

* Burnet, i. 646., and Speaker Onslow's note; Clarendon to Rochester, May 8. 1686

† Burnet, i. 634.

Digitized by Google

poisoner, was admitted to mercy. For Storey was able to give important assistance to Jeffreys in wringing fifteen thousand pounds out of Prideaux.*

Wade, Goodenough, and Ferguson.

None of the traitors had less right to expect favour than Wade, Goodenough, and Ferguson. These three chiefs of the rebellion had fled together from the field of Sedgemoor, and had reached the coast in safety. But they had found a frigate cruising near the spot where they had hoped to embark. They had then separated. Wade and Goodenough were soon discovered and brought up to London. Deeply as they had been implicated in the Rye House plot, conspicuous as they had been among the chiefs of the Western insurrection, they were suffered to live, because they had it in their power to give information which enabled the King to slaughter and plunder some persons whom he hated, but to whom he had never yet been able to bring home any crime.†

How Ferguson escaped was, and still is, a mystery. Of all the enemies of the government he was, without doubt, the most deeply criminal. He was the original author of the plot for assassinating the royal brothers. He had written that Declaration which, for insolence, malignity, and mendacity, stands unrivalled even among the libels of those stormy times. He had instigated Monmouth first to invade the kingdom, and then to usurp the crown. It was reasonable to expect that a strict search would be made for the archtraitor, as he was often called; and such a search a man of so singular an aspect and dialect could scarcely have eluded. It was confidently reported in the coffee houses of London that Ferguson

* Calamy's Memoirs; Commons' Journals, December 26. 1690; Sunderland to Jeffreys, September 14. 1685; Privy Council Book, February 26. 168⅝.

† Lansdowne MS. 1152.; Harl. MS. 6845.; London Gazette, July 20. 1685.

Digitized by Google

was taken; and this report found credit with men who had excellent opportunities of knowing the truth. The next thing that was heard of him was that he was safe on the Continent. It was strongly suspected that he had been in constant communication with the government against which he was constantly plotting, that he had, while urging his associates to every excess of rashness, sent to Whitehall just so much information about their proceedings as might suffice to save his own neck, and that therefore orders had been given to let him escape.*

And now Jeffreys had done his work, and returned to claim his reward. He arrived at Windsor from the West, leaving carnage, mourning, and terror behind him. The hatred with which he was regarded by the people of Somersetshire has no parallel in our history. It was not to be quenched by time or by political changes, was long transmitted from generation to generation, and raged fiercely against his innocent progeny. When he had been many years dead, when his name and title were extinct, his granddaughter

* Many writers have asserted, without the slightest foundation, that a pardon was granted to Ferguson by James. Some have been so absurd as to cite this imaginary pardon, which, if it were real, would prove only that Ferguson was a court spy, in proof of the magnanimity and benignity of the prince who beheaded Alice Lisle and burned Elizabeth Gaunt. Ferguson was not only not specially pardoned, but was excluded by name from the general pardon published in the following spring. (London Gazette, March 15. 168½.) If, as the public suspected, and as seems probable, indulgence was shown to him, it was indulgence of which James was, not without reason, ashamed, and which was, as far as possible, kept secret. The reports which were current in London at the time are mentioned in the Observator, Aug. 1. 1685.

Sir John Reresby, who ought to have been well informed, positively affirms that Ferguson was taken three days after the battle of Sedgemoor. But Sir John was certainly wrong as to the date, and may therefore have been wrong as to the whole story. From the London Gazette, and from Goodenough's confession (Lansdowne MS. 1152.), it is clear that, a fortnight after the battle, Ferguson had not been caught, and was supposed to be still lurking in England.

Digitized by Google

the Countess of Pomfret, travelling along the western road, was insulted by the populace, and found that she could not safely venture herself among the descendants of those who had witnessed the Bloody Assizes.*

But at the court Jeffreys was cordially welcomed. He was a judge after his master's own heart. James had watched the circuit with interest and delight. In his drawingroom and at his table he had frequently talked of the havoc which was making among his disaffected subjects with a glee at which the foreign ministers stood aghast. With his own hand he had penned accounts of what he facetiously called his Lord Chief Justice's campaign in the West. Some hundreds of rebels, His Majesty wrote to the Hague, had been condemned. Some of them had been hanged: more should be hanged: and the rest should be sent to the plantations. It was to no purpose that Ken wrote to implore mercy for the misguided people, and described with pathetic eloquence the frightful state of his diocese. He complained that it was impossible to walk along the highways without seeing some terrible spectacle, and that the whole air of Somersetshire was tainted with death. The King read, and remained, according to the saying of Churchill, hard as the marble chimneypieces of Whitehall. At Windsor the great seal of England was put into the hands of Jeffreys, and in the next London Gazette it was solemnly notified that this honour was the reward of the many eminent and faithful services which he had rendered to the crown.†

Jeffreys made Lord Chancellor.

At a later period, when all men of all parties spoke with horror of the Bloody Assizes, the wicked Judge

* Granger's Biographical History.

† Burnet, i. 648.; James to the Prince of Orange, Sept. 10. and 24. 1685; Lord Lonsdale's Memoirs; London Gazette, Oct. 1. 1685.

Digitized by Google

and the wicked King attempted to vindicate themselves by throwing the blame on each other. Jeffreys, in the Tower, protested that, in his utmost cruelty, he had not gone beyond his master's express orders, nay, that he had fallen short of them. James, at Saint Germain's, would willingly have had it believed that his own inclinations had been on the side of clemency, and that unmerited obloquy had been brought on him by the violence of his minister. But neither of these hardhearted men must be absolved at the expense of the other. The plea set up for James can be proved under his own hand to be false in fact. The plea of Jeffreys, even if it be true in fact, is utterly worthless.

Trial and execution of Cornish.

The slaughter in the West was over. The slaughter in London was about to begin. The government was peculiarly desirous to find victims among the great Whig merchants of the City. They had, in the last reign, been a formidable part of the strength of the opposition. They were wealthy; and their wealth was not, like that of many noblemen and country gentlemen, protected by entail against forfeiture. In the case of Grey, and of men situated like him, it was impossible to gratify cruelty and rapacity at once: but a rich trader might be both hanged and plundered. The commercial grandees, however, though in general hostile to Popery and to arbitrary power, had yet been too scrupulous or too timid to incur the guilt of high treason. One of the most considerable among them was Henry Cornish. He had been an Alderman under the old charter of the City, and had filled the office of Sheriff when the question of the Exclusion Bill occupied the public mind. In politics he was a Whig: his religious opinions leaned towards Presbyterianism: but his temper was cautious and moderate. It is not proved by trustworthy evidence that he ever approached the verge of treason. He had, indeed, when Sheriff, been

Digitized by Google

very unwilling to employ as his deputy a man so violent and unprincipled as Goodenough. When the Rye House plot was discovered, great hopes were entertained at Whitehall that Cornish would appear to have been concerned: but these hopes were disappointed. One of the conspirators, indeed, John Rumsey, was ready to swear anything: but a single witness was not sufficient; and no second witness could be found. More than two years had since elapsed. Cornish thought himself safe: but the eye of the tyrant was upon him. Goodenough, terrified by the near prospect of death, and still harbouring malice on account of the unfavourable opinion which had always been entertained of him by his old master, consented to supply the testimony which had hitherto been wanting. Cornish was arrested while transacting business on the Exchange, was hurried to gaol, was kept there some days in solitary confinement, and was brought altogether unprepared to the bar of the Old Bailey. The case against him rested wholly on the evidence of Rumsey and Goodenough. Both were, by their own confession, accomplices in the plot with which they charged the prisoner. Both were impelled by the strongest pressure of hope and fear to criminate him. Evidence was produced which proved that Goodenough was also under the influence of personal enmity. Rumsey's story was inconsistent with the story which he had told when he appeared as a witness against Lord Russell. But these things were urged in vain. On the bench sate three judges who had been with Jeffreys in the West; and it was remarked by those who watched their deportment that they had come back from the carnage of Taunton in a fierce and excited state. It is indeed but too true that the taste for blood is a taste which even men not naturally cruel may, by habit, speedily acquire. The bar and the bench united to browbeat the unfortunate Whig.

Digitized by Google

The jury, named by a courtly Sheriff, readily found a verdict of Guilty; and, in spite of the indignant murmurs of the public, Cornish suffered death within ten days after he had been arrested. That no circumstance of degradation might be wanting, the gibbet was set up where King Street meets Cheapside, in sight of the house where he had long lived in general respect, of the Exchange where his credit had always stood high, and of the Guildhall where he had distinguished himself as a popular leader. He died with courage and with many pious expressions, but showed, by look and gesture, such strong resentment at the barbarity and injustice with which he had been treated, that his enemies spread a calumnious report concerning him. He was drunk, they said, or out of his mind, when he was turned off. William Penn, however, who stood near the gallows, and whose prejudices were all on the side of the government, afterwards said that he could see in Cornish's deportment nothing but the natural indignation of an innocent man slain under the forms of law. The head of the murdered magistrate was placed over the Guildhall.*

Trials and executions of Fernley and Elizabeth Gaunt.

Black as this case was, it was not the blackest which disgraced the sessions of that autumn at the Old Bailey. Among the persons concerned in the Rye House plot was a man named James Burton. By his own confession he had been present when the design of assassination was discussed by his accomplices. When the conspiracy was detected, a reward was offered for his apprehension. He was saved from death by an ancient matron of the Baptist persuasion, named Elizabeth Gaunt. This woman, with the peculiar manners and phraseology which then distinguished

* Trial of Cornish in the Collection of State Trials; Sir J. Hawles's Remarks on Mr. Cornish's Trial; Burnet, i. 651.; Bloody Assizes; Stat. 1 Gul. & Mar.

Digitized by Google

her sect, had a large charity. Her life was passed in relieving the unhappy of all religious denominations, and she was well known as a constant visitor of the gaols. Her political and theological opinions, as well as her compassionate disposition, led her to do everything in her power for Burton. She procured a boat which took him to Gravesend, where he got on board of a ship bound for Amsterdam. At the moment of parting she put into his hand a sum of money which, for her means, was very large. Burton, after living some time in exile, returned to England with Monmouth, fought at Sedgemoor, fled to London, and took refuge in the house of John Fernley, a barber in Whitechapel. Fernley was very poor. He was besieged by creditors. He knew that a reward of a hundred pounds had been offered by the government for the apprehension of Burton. But the honest man was incapable of betraying one who, in extreme peril, had come under the shadow of his roof. Unhappily it was soon noised abroad that the anger of James was more strongly excited against those who harboured rebels than against the rebels themselves. He had publicly declared that of all forms of treason the hiding of traitors from his vengeance was the most unpardonable. Burton knew this. He delivered himself up to the government; and he gave information against Fernley and Elizabeth Gaunt. They were brought to trial. The villain whose life they had preserved had the heart and the forehead to appear as the principal witness against them. They were convicted. Fernley was sentenced to the gallows, Elizabeth Gaunt to the stake. Even after all the horrors of that year, many thought it impossible that these judgments should be carried into execution. But the King was without pity. Fernley was hanged. Elizabeth Gaunt was burned alive at Tyburn on the same day on which Cornish suffered death in Cheapside. She left a paper written, indeed, in no graceful

Digitized by Google

style, yet such as was read by many thousands with compassion and horror. "My fault," she said, "was one which a prince might well have forgiven. I did but relieve a poor family; and lo! I must die for it." She complained of the insolence of the judges, of the ferocity of the gaoler, and of the tyranny of him, the great one of all, to whose pleasure she and so many other victims had been sacrificed. In so far as they had injured herself, she forgave them: but, in that they were implacable enemies of that good cause which would yet revive and flourish, she left them to the judgment of the King of Kings. To the last she preserved a tranquil courage, which reminded the spectators of the most heroic deaths of which they had read in Fox. William Penn, for whom exhibitions which humane men generally avoid seem to have had a strong attraction, hastened from Cheapside, where he had seen Cornish hanged, to Tyburn, in order to see Elizabeth Gaunt burned. He afterwards related that, when she calmly disposed the straw about her in such a manner as to shorten her sufferings, all the bystanders burst into tears. It was much noticed that, while the foulest judicial murder which had disgraced even those times was perpetrating, a tempest burst forth, such as had not been known since that great hurricane which had raged round the deathbed of Oliver. The oppressed Puritans reckoned up, not without a gloomy satisfaction, the houses which had been blown down, and the ships which had been cast away, and derived some consolation from thinking that heaven was bearing awful testimony against the iniquity which afflicted the earth. Since that terrible day no woman has suffered death in England for any political offence.*

* Trials of Fernley and Elizabeth Gaunt, in the Collection of State Trials; Burnet, i. 649.; Bloody Assizes; Sir J. Bramston's Memoirs; Luttrell's Diary, Oct. 23. 1685.

Digitized by Google

Trial and execution of Bateman.

It was not thought that Goodenough had yet earned his pardon. The government was bent on destroying a victim of no high rank, a surgeon in the City, named Bateman. He had attended Shaftesbury professionally, and had been a zealous Exclusionist. He may possibly have been privy to the Whig plot; but it is certain that he had not been one of the leading conspirators; for, in the great mass of depositions published by the government, his name occurs only once, and then not in connection with any crime bordering on high treason. From his indictment, and from the scanty account which remains of his trial, it seems clear that he was not even accused of participating in the design of murdering the royal brothers. The malignity with which so obscure a man, guilty of so slight an offence, was hunted down, while traitors far more criminal and far more eminent were allowed to ransom themselves by giving evidence against him, seemed to require explanation; and a disgraceful explanation was found. When Oates, after his scourging, was carried into Newgate insensible, and, as all thought, in the last agony, he had been bled and his wounds had been dressed by Bateman. This was an offence not to be forgiven. Bateman was arrested and indicted. The witnesses against him were men of infamous character, men, too, who were swearing for their own lives. None of them had yet got his pardon; and it was a popular saying, that they fished for prey, like tame cormorants, with ropes round their necks. The prisoner, stupefied by illness, was unable to articulate, or to understand what passed. His son and daughter stood by him at the bar. They read as well as they could some notes which he had set down, and examined his witnesses. It was to little purpose. He was convicted, hanged, and quartered.*

* Bateman's Trial in the Collection of State Trials; Sir John

Digitized by Google

Never, not even under the tyranny of Laud, had the condition of the Puritans been so deplorable as at that time. Never had spies been so actively employed in detecting congregations. Never had magistrates, grand jurors, rectors and churchwardens been so much on the alert. Many Dissenters were cited before the ecclesiastical courts. Others found it necessary to purchase the connivance of the agents of the government by presents of hogsheads of wine, and of gloves stuffed with guineas. It was impossible for the separatists to pray together without precautions such as are employed by coiners and receivers of stolen goods. The places of meeting were frequently changed. Worship was performed sometimes just before break of day and sometimes at dead of night. Round the building where the little flock was gathered sentinels were posted to give the alarm if a stranger drew near. The minister in disguise was introduced through the garden and the back yard. In some houses there were trap doors through which, in case of danger, he might descend. Where Nonconformists lived next door to each other, the walls were often broken open, and secret passages were made from dwelling to dwelling. No psalm was sung; and many contrivances were used to prevent the voice of the preacher, in his moments of fervour, from being heard beyond the walls. Yet, with all this care, it was often found impossible to elude the vigilance of informers. In the suburbs of London, especially, the law was enforced with the utmost rigour. Several opulent gentlemen were accused of holding conventicles. Their houses were strictly searched, and distresses were levied to the amount of many thousands of pounds. The fiercer and bolder sectaries, thus driven

Persecution of the Protestant Dissenters.

Hawles's Remarks. It is worth while to compare Thomas Lee's evidence on this occasion with his confession previously published by authority.

Digitized by Google

from the shelter of roofs, met in the open air, and determined to repel force by force. A Middlesex justice, who had learned that a nightly prayer meeting was held in a gravel pit about two miles from London, took with him a strong body of constables, broke in upon the assembly, and seized the preacher. But the congregation, which consisted of about two hundred men, soon rescued their pastor, and put the magistrate and his officers to flight.* This, however, was no ordinary occurrence. In general the Puritan spirit seemed to be more effectually cowed at this conjuncture than at any moment before or since. The Tory pamphleteers boasted that not one fanatic dared to move tongue or pen in defence of his religious opinions. Dissenting ministers, however blameless in life, however eminent for learning and abilities, could not venture to walk the streets for fear of outrages, which were not only not repressed, but encouraged, by those whose duty it was to preserve the peace. Some divines of great fame were in prison. Among these was Richard Baxter. Others, who had, during a quarter of a century, borne up against oppression, now lost heart, and quitted the kingdom. Among these was John Howe. Great numbers of persons who had been accustomed to frequent conventicles repaired to the parish churches. It was remarked that the schismatics who had been terrified into this show of conformity might easily be distinguished by the difficulty which they had in finding out the collect, and by the awkward manner in which they bowed at the name of Jesus.†

* Van Citters, Oct. $\frac{13}{23}$. 1685.

† Neal's History of the Puritans, Calamy's Account of the ejected Ministers, and the Nonconformists' Memorial, contain abundant proofs of the severity of this persecution. Howe's farewell letter to his flock will be found in the interesting life of that great man, by Mr. Rogers. Howe complains that he could not venture to show himself in the streets of London, and that his health had suffered from want of air and exercise. But the most vivid picture of the distress of

Digitized by Google

Through many years the autumn of 1685 was remembered by the Nonconformists as a time of misery and terror. Yet in that autumn might be discerned the first faint indications of a great turn of fortune; and before eighteen months had elapsed, the intolerant King and the intolerant Church were eagerly bidding against each other for the support of the party which both had so deeply injured.

the Nonconformists is furnished by their deadly enemy, Lestrange, in the Observators of September and October, 1685.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER VI.

The power of James at the height.

JAMES was now at the height of power and prosperity. Both in England and in Scotland he had vanquished his enemies, and had punished them with a severity which had indeed excited their bitterest hatred, but had, at the same time, effectually quelled their courage. The Whig party seemed extinct. The name of Whig was never used except as a term of reproach. The Parliament was devoted to the King; and it was in his power to keep that Parliament to the end of his reign. The Church was louder than ever in professions of attachment to him, and had, during the late insurrection, acted up to those professions. The Judges were his tools; and, if they ceased to be so, it was in his power to remove them. The corporations were filled with his creatures. His revenues far exceeded those of his predecessors. His pride rose high. He was not the same man who, a few months before, in doubt whether his throne might not be overturned in an hour, had implored foreign help with unkingly supplications, and had accepted it with tears of gratitude. Visions of dominion and glory rose before him. He already saw himself, in imagination, the umpire of Europe, the champion of many states oppressed by one too powerful monarchy. So early as the month of June he had assured the United Provinces that, as soon as the affairs of England were settled, he would show the world how little he feared France. In conformity with these assurances, he, within a month after the battle of Sedgemoor, concluded with the States Ge-

Digitized by Google

neral a defensive treaty, framed in the very spirit of the Triple League. It was regarded, both at the Hague and at Versailles, as a most significant circumstance that Halifax, who was the constant and mortal enemy of French ascendency, and who had scarcely ever before been consulted on any grave affair since the beginning of the reign, took the lead on this occasion, and seemed to have the royal ear. It was a circumstance not less significant that no previous communication was made to Barillon. Both he and his master were taken by surprise. Lewis was much troubled, and expressed great, and not unreasonable, anxiety as to the ulterior designs of the prince who had lately been his pensioner and vassal. There were strong rumours that William of Orange was busied in organising a great confederacy, which was to include both branches of the House of Austria, the United Provinces, the kingdom of Sweden, and the electorate of Brandenburg. It now seemed that this confederacy would have at its head the King and Parliament of England.*

His foreign policy.

In fact, negotiations tending to such a result were actually opened. Spain proposed to form a close alliance with James; and he listened to the proposition with favour, though it was evident that such an alliance would be little less than a declaration of war against France. But he postponed his final decision till after the Parliament should have reassembled. The fate of Christendom depended on the temper in which he might then find the Commons. If they were disposed to acquiesce in his plans of domestic government, there would be nothing to prevent him from interfering with vigour and authority in the great dispute which must soon be brought to an issue on the Continent. If they

* Avaux Neg., Aug. $\frac{5}{15}$. 1685; August $\frac{14}{24}$.; Lewis to Barillon, August $\frac{14}{24}$. $\frac{25}{35}$. Despatch of Van Citters and his colleagues, enclosing the treaty,

Digitized by Google

were refractory, he must relinquish all thought of arbitrating between contending nations, must again implore French assistance, must again submit to French dictation, must sink into a potentate of the third or fourth class, and must indemnify himself for the contempt with which he would be regarded abroad by triumphs over law and public opinion at home.

His plans of domestic government.

It seemed, indeed, that it would not be easy for him to demand more than the Commons were disposed to give. Already they had abundantly proved that they were desirous to maintain his prerogatives unimpaired, and that they were by no means extreme to mark his encroachments on the rights of the people. Indeed, eleven twelfths of the members were either dependents of the court, or zealous Cavaliers from the country. There were few things which such an assembly could pertinaciously refuse to the Sovereign; but, happily for the nation, those few things were the very things on which James had set his heart.

The Habeas Corpus Act.

One of his objects was to obtain a repeal of the Habeas Corpus Act, which he hated, as it was natural that a tyrant should hate the most stringent curb that ever legislation imposed on tyranny. This feeling remained deeply fixed in his mind to the last, and appears in the instructions which he drew up, in exile, for the guidance of his son.* But the Habeas Corpus Act, though passed during the ascendency of the Whigs, was not more dear to the Whigs than to the Tories. It is indeed not wonderful that this great law should be highly prized by all Englishmen without distinction of party: for it is a law which, not by circuitous, but by direct

* Instructions headed, "For my son the Prince of Wales, 1692, among the Stuart Papers.

Digitized by Google

operation, adds to the security and happiness of every inhabitant of the realm.*

James had yet another design, odious to the party which had set him on the throne and which had upheld him there. He wished to form a great standing army. He had taken advantage of the late insurrection to make large additions to the military force which his brother had left. The bodies now designated as the first six regiments of dragoon guards, the third and fourth regiments of dragoons, and the nine regiments of infantry of the line, from the seventh to the fifteenth inclusive, had just been raised.† The effect of these augmentations, and of the recall of the garrison of Tangier, was that the number of regular troops in England had, in a few months, been increased from six thousand to near twenty thousand. No English King had ever, in time of peace, had such a force at his command. Yet even with this force James was not content. He often repeated that no confidence could be placed in the fidelity of the trainbands, that they sympathised with all the passions of the class to which they belonged, that, at Sedgemoor, there had been more militiamen in the rebel army than in the royal encampment, and that, if the throne had been defended only by the array of the counties, Monmouth would have marched in triumph from Lyme to London. The standing army.

The revenue, large as it was when compared with that of former Kings, barely sufficed to meet this new charge. A great part of the produce of the new taxes was absorbed by the naval expenditure. At the close of the late reign the whole cost of the army, the

* "The Habeas Corpus," said Johnson, the most bigoted of Tories, to Boswell, "is the single advantage which our government has over that of other countries."

† See the Historical Records of Regiments, published under the supervision of the Adjutant General.

Digitized by Google

Tangier regiments included, had been under three hundred thousand pounds a year. Six hundred thousand pounds a year would not now suffice.* If any further augmentation were made, it would be necessary to demand a supply from Parliament; and it was not likely that Parliament would be in a complying mood. The very name of standing army was hateful to the whole nation, and to no part of the nation more hateful than to the Cavalier gentlemen who filled the Lower House. In their minds a standing army was inseparably associated with the Rump, with the Protector, with the spoliation of the Church, with the purgation of the Universities, with the abolition of the peerage, with the murder of the King, with the sullen reign of the Saints, with cant and asceticism, with fines and sequestrations, with the insults which Major Generals, sprung from the dregs of the people, had offered to the oldest and most honourable families of the kingdom. There was, moreover, scarcely a baronet or a squire in the Parliament who did not owe part of his importance in his own county to his rank in the militia. If that national force were set aside, the gentry of England must lose much of their dignity and influence. It was therefore probable that the King would find it more difficult to obtain funds for the support of his army than even to obtain the repeal of the Habeas Corpus Act.

Designs in favour of the Roman Catholic religion.

But both the designs which have been mentioned were subordinate to one great design on which the King's whole soul was bent, but which was abhorred by those Tory gentlemen who were ready to shed their blood for his rights, abhorred by that Church which had never, during three generations of civil discord, wavered in

* Barillon, Dec. $\frac{1}{11}$. 1685. He had studied the subject much. "C'est un détail," he says, "dont j'ai connoissance." It appears from the Treasury Warrant Book that the charge of the army for the year 1687 was fixed on the first of January at 623,104*l.* 9*s.* 11*d.*

Digitized by Google

fidelity to his house, abhorred even by that army on which, in the last extremity, he must rely.

His religion was still under proscription. Many rigorous laws against Roman Catholics appeared on the Statute Book, and had, within no long time, been rigorously executed. The Test Act excluded from civil and military office all who dissented from the Church of England; and, by a subsequent Act, passed when the fictions of Oates had driven the nation wild, it had been provided that no person should sit in either House of Parliament without solemnly abjuring the doctrine of transubstantiation. That the King should wish to obtain for the Church to which he belonged a complete toleration was natural and right; nor is there any reason to doubt that, by a little patience, prudence, and justice, such a toleration might have been obtained.

The extreme antipathy and dread with which the English people regarded his religion was not to be ascribed solely or chiefly to theological animosity. That salvation might be found in the Church of Rome, nay, that some members of that Church had been among the brightest examples of Christian virtue, was admitted by all divines of the Anglican communion and by the most illustrious Nonconformists. It is notorious that the penal laws against Popery were strenuously defended by many who thought Arianism, Quakerism, and Judaism more dangerous, in a spiritual point of view, than Popery, and who yet showed no disposition to enact similar laws against Arians, Quakers, or Jews.

It is easy to explain why the Roman Catholic was treated with less indulgence than was shown to men who renounced the doctrine of the Nicene fathers, and even to men who had not been admitted by baptism within the Christian pale. There was among the English a strong conviction that the Roman Catholic, where the interests of his religion were

Digitized by Google

concerned, thought himself free from all the ordinary rules of morality, nay, that he thought it meritorious to violate those rules if, by so doing, he could avert injury or reproach from the Church of which he was a member.

Nor was this opinion destitute of a show of reason. It was impossible to deny that Roman Catholic casuists of great eminence had written in defence of equivocation, of mental reservation, of perjury, and even of assassination. Nor, it was said, had the speculations of this odious school of sophists been barren of results. The massacre of Saint Bartholomew, the murder of the first William of Orange, the murder of Henry the Third of France, the numerous conspiracies which had been formed against the life of Elizabeth, and, above all, the gunpowder treason, were constantly cited as instances of the close connection between vicious theory and vicious practice. It was alleged that every one of these crimes had been prompted or applauded by Roman Catholic divines. The letters which Everard Digby wrote in lemon juice from the Tower to his wife had recently been published, and were often quoted. He was a scholar and a gentleman, upright in all ordinary dealings, and strongly impressed with a sense of duty to God. Yet he had been deeply concerned in the plot for blowing up King, Lords, and Commons, and had, on the brink of eternity, declared that it was incomprehensible to him how any Roman Catholic should think such a design sinful. The inference popularly drawn from these things was that, however fair the general character of a Papist might be, there was no excess of fraud or cruelty of which he was not capable when the safety and honour of his Church were at stake.

The extraordinary success of the fables of Oates is to be chiefly ascribed to the prevalence of this opinion. It was to no purpose that the accused Roman

Digitized by Google

Catholic appealed to the integrity, humanity, and loyalty which he had shown through the whole course of his life. It was to no purpose that he called crowds of respectable witnesses, of his own persuasion, to contradict monstrous romances invented by the most infamous of mankind. It was to no purpose that, with the halter round his neck, he invoked on himself the whole vengeance of the God before whom, in a few moments, he must appear, if he had been guilty of meditating any ill to his prince or to his Protestant fellow countrymen. The evidence which he produced in his favour proved only how little Popish oaths were worth. His very virtues raised a presumption of his guilt. That he had before him death and judgment in immediate prospect only made it more likely that he would deny what, without injury to the holiest of causes, he could not confess. Among the unhappy men who were convicted of the murder of Godfrey was one Protestant of no high character, Henry Berry. It is a remarkable and well attested circumstance, that Berry's last words did more to shake the credit of the plot than the dying declarations of pious and honourable Roman Catholics who underwent the same fate.*

It was not only by the ignorant populace, it was not only by zealots in whom fanaticism had extinguished all reason and charity, that the Roman Catholic was regarded as a man the very tenderness of whose conscience might make him a false witness, an incendiary, or a murderer, as a man who, where his Church was concerned, shrank from no atrocity and could be bound by no oath. If there were in that age two persons inclined by their judgment and by their temper to toleration, those persons were Tillotson and Locke. Yet Tillotson, whose indul-

* Burnet, i. 447.

Digitized by Google

gence for various kinds of schismatics and heretics brought on him the reproach of heterodoxy, told the House of Commons from the pulpit that it was their duty to make effectual provision against the propagation of a religion more mischievous than irreligion itself, of a religion which demanded from its followers services directly opposed to the first principles of morality. His temper, he truly said, was prone to lenity; but his duty to the community forced him to be, in this one instance, severe. He declared that, in his judgment, Pagans who had never heard the name of Christ, and who were guided only by the light of nature, were more trustworthy members of civil society than men who had been formed in the schools of the Popish casuists.* Locke, in the celebrated treatise in which he laboured to show that even the grossest forms of idolatry ought not to be prohibited under penal sanctions, contended that the Church which taught men not to keep faith with heretics had no claim to toleration.†

It is evident that, in such circumstances, the greatest service which an English Roman Catholic could render to his brethren in the faith was to convince the public that, whatever some too subtle theorists might have written, whatever some rash men might, in times of violent excitement, have done, his Church did not hold that any end could sanctify means inconsistent with morality. And this great service it was in the power of James to render. He was King. He was more powerful than any English King had been within the memory of the oldest man. It depended on him whether the reproach which lay on his religion should be taken away or should be made permanent.

Had he conformed to the laws, had he kept his

* Tillotson's Sermon, preached before the House of Commons, Nov. 5. 1678.

† Locke, First Letter on Toleration.

Digitized by Google

promises, had he abstained from employing any unrighteous methods for the propagation of his own theological tenets, had he suspended the operation of the penal statutes by a large exercise of his unquestionable prerogative of mercy, but, at the same time, carefully abstained from violating the civil or ecclesiastical constitution of the realm, the feeling of his people must have undergone a rapid change. So conspicuous an example of good faith punctiliously observed by a Popish prince towards a Protestant nation would have quieted the public apprehensions. Men who saw that a Roman Catholic might safely be suffered to direct the whole executive administration, to command the army and navy, to convoke and dissolve the legislature, to appoint the Bishops and Deans of the Church of England, would soon have ceased to fear that any great evil would arise from allowing a Roman Catholic to be captain of a company or alderman of a borough. It is probable that, in a few years, the sect so long detested by the nation would, with general applause, have been admitted to office and to Parliament.

If, on the other hand, James should attempt to promote the interest of his Church by violating the fundamental laws of his kingdom and the solemn promises which he had repeatedly made in the face of the whole world, it could hardly be doubted that the charges which it had been the fashion to bring against the Roman Catholic religion would be considered by all Protestants as fully established. For, if ever a Roman Catholic could be expected to keep faith with heretics, James might have been expected to keep faith with the Anglican clergy. To them he owed his crown. But for their strenuous opposition to the Exclusion Bill he would have been a banished man. He had repeatedly and emphatically acknowledged the debt which he owed to them, and had vowed to maintain them in all their legal rights. If he

Digitized by Google

could not be bound by ties like these, it must be evident that, where his superstition was concerned, no tie of gratitude or of honour could bind him. To trust him would thenceforth be impossible; and, if his people could not trust him, what member of his Church could they trust? He was not supposed to be constitutionally or habitually treacherous. To his blunt manner, and to his want of consideration for the feelings of others, he owed a much higher reputation for sincerity than he at all deserved. His eulogists affected to call him James the Just. If then it should appear that, in turning Papist, he had also turned dissembler and promisebreaker, what conclusion was likely to be drawn by a nation already disposed to believe that Popery had a pernicious influence on the moral character?

For these reasons many of the most eminent Roman Catholics of that age, and among them the Supreme Pontiff, were of opinion that the interest of their Church in our island would be most effectually promoted by a moderate and constitutional policy. But such considerations had no effect on the slow understanding and imperious temper of James. In his eagerness to remove the disabilities under which the professors of his religion lay, he took a course which convinced the most enlightened and tolerant Protestants of his time that those disabilities were essential to the safety of the state. To his policy the English Roman Catholics owed three years of lawless and insolent triumph, and a hundred and forty years of subjection and degradation.

Violation of the Test Act.

Many members of his Church held commissions in the newly raised regiments. This breach of the law for a time passed uncensured: for men were not disposed to note every irregularity which was committed by a King suddenly called upon to defend his crown and his life against rebels.

Digitized by Google

But the danger was now over. The insurgents had been vanquished and punished. Their unsuccessful attempt had strengthened the government which they had hoped to overthrow. Yet still James continued to grant commissions to unqualified persons; and speedily it was announced that he was determined to be no longer bound by the Test Act, that he hoped to induce the Parliament to repeal that Act, but that, if the Parliament proved refractory, he would not the less have his own way.

As soon as this was known, a deep murmur, the forerunner of a tempest, gave him warning that the spirit before which his grandfather, his father, and his brother had been compelled to recede, though dormant, was not extinct. Opposition appeared first in the cabinet. Halifax did not attempt to conceal his disgust and alarm. At the Council board he courageously gave utterance to those feelings which, as it soon appeared, pervaded the whole nation. None of his colleagues seconded him; and the subject dropped. He was summoned to the royal closet, and had two long conferences with his master. James tried the effect of compliments and blandishments, but to no purpose. Halifax positively refused to promise that he would give his vote in the House of Lords for the repeal either of the Test Act or of the Habeas Corpus Act. Disgrace of Halifax.

Some of those who were about the King advised him not, on the eve of the meeting of Parliament, to drive the most eloquent and accomplished statesman of the age into opposition. They represented that Halifax loved the dignity of office, that, while he continued to be Lord President, it would be hardly possible for him to put forth his whole strength against the government, and that to dismiss him from his high post was to emancipate him from all restraint. The King was peremptory. Halifax was

Digitized by Google

informed that his services were no longer needed, and his name was struck out of the Council Book.*

General discontent.

His dismission produced a great sensation not only in England, but also at Paris, at Vienna, and at the Hague: for it was well known, that he had always laboured to counteract the influence exercised by the court of Versailles on English affairs. Lewis expressed much pleasure at the news. The ministers of the United Provinces and of the House of Austria, on the other hand, extolled the wisdom and virtue of the disgarded statesman in a manner which gave serious offence at Whitehall. James was particularly angry with the secretary of the imperial legation, who did not scruple to say that the eminent service which Halifax had performed in the debate on the Exclusion Bill had been requited with gross ingratitude.†

It soon became clear that Halifax would have many followers. A portion of the Tories, with their old leader, Danby, at their head, began to hold Whiggish language. Even the prelates hinted that there was a point at which the loyalty due to the prince must yield to higher considerations. The discontent of the chiefs of the army was still more extraordinary and still more formidable. Already began to appear the first symptoms of that feeling which, three years later, impelled so many officers of high rank to desert the royal standard. Men who had never before had a scruple had on a sudden become strangely scrupulous. Churchill gently whispered that the King was going too far. Kirke, just returned from his Western butchery, swore to stand by the Protestant religion. Even if he abjured the faith in which he had been bred, he would never, he said, become a Papist. He was already bespoken. If ever he did apostatise, he was

* Council Book. The erasure is dated Oct. 21. 1685. Barillon, Oct. $\frac{18}{28}$.

† Barillon, $\frac{\text{Oct. 26.}}{\text{Nov. 5}}$ 1685; Lewis to Barillon, $\frac{\text{Oct. 27.}}{\text{Nov. 6.}}$; Nov. $\frac{5}{15}$.

Digitized by Google

bound by a solemn promise to the Emperor of Morocco to turn Mussulman.*

While the nation, agitated by many strong emotions, looked anxiously forward to the reassembling of the Houses, tidings, which increased the prevailing excitement, arrived from France.

Persecution of the French Huguenots.

The long and heroic struggle which the Huguenots had maintained against the French government had been brought to a final close by the ability and vigour of Richelieu. That great statesman vanquished them; but he confirmed to them the liberty of conscience which had been bestowed on them by the edict of Nantes. They were suffered, under some restraints of no galling kind, to worship God according to their own ritual, and to write in defence of their own doctrine. They were admissible to political and military employment; nor did their heresy, during a considerable time, practically impede their rise in the world. Some of them commanded the armies of the state; and others presided over important departments of the civil administration. At length a change took place. Lewis the Fourteenth had, from an early age, regarded the Calvinists with an aversion at once religious and political. As a zealous Roman Catholic, he detested their theological dogmas. As a prince fond of arbitrary power, he detested those republican theories which were intermingled with the Genevese divinity. He gradually retrenched all the privileges which the schismatics enjoyed. He interfered with the education of Protestant children, confiscated property bequeathed to Protestant consistories, and on frivolous pretexts shut up Protestant churches. The Protestant ministers were harassed by the taxgatherers. The Protestant magistrates were deprived of the honour of nobility.

* There is a remarkable account of the first appearance of the symptoms of discontent among the Tories in a letter of Halifax to Chesterfield, written in October, 1685. Burnet, i. 684.

Digitized by Google

The Protestant officers of the royal household were informed that His Majesty dispensed with their services. Orders were given that no Protestant should be admitted into the legal profession. The oppressed sect showed some faint signs of that spirit which in the preceding century had bidden defiance to the whole power of the House of Valois. Massacres and executions followed. Dragoons were quartered in the towns where the heretics were numerous, and in the country seats of the heretic gentry; and the cruelty and licentiousness of these rude missionaries was sanctioned or leniently censured by the government. Still, however, the edict of Nantes, though practically violated in its most essential provisions, had not been formally rescinded; and the King repeatedly declared in solemn public acts that he was resolved to maintain it. But the bigots and flatterers who had his ear gave him advice which he was but too willing to take. They represented to him that his rigorous policy had been eminently successful, that little or no resistance had been made to his will, that thousands of Huguenots had already been converted, that, if he would take the one decisive step which yet remained, those who were still obstinate would speedily submit, France would be purged from the taint of heresy, and her prince would have earned a heavenly crown not less glorious than that of Saint Lewis. These arguments prevailed. The final blow was struck. The edict of Nantes was revoked; and a crowd of decrees against the sectaries appeared in rapid succession. Boys and girls were torn from their parents and sent to be educated in convents. All Calvinistic ministers were commanded either to abjure their religion or to quit their country within a fortnight. The other professors of the reformed faith were forbidden to leave the kingdom; and, in order to prevent them from making their escape, the outports and frontiers were strictly guarded. It was thought that the flocks, thus separated from the evil

Digitized by Google

shepherds, would soon return to the true fold. But in spite of all the vigilance of the military police there was a vast emigration. It was calculated that, in a few months, fifty thousand families quitted France for ever. Nor were the refugees such as a country can well spare. They were generally persons of intelligent minds, of industrious habits, and of austere morals. In the list are to be found names eminent in war, in science, in literature, and in art. Some of the exiles offered their swords to William of Orange, and distinguished themselves by the fury with which they fought against their persecutor. Others avenged themselves with weapons still more formidable, and, by means of the presses of Holland, England, and Germany, inflamed, during thirty years, the public mind of Europe against the French government. A more peaceful class erected silk manufactories in the eastern suburb of London. One detachment of emigrants taught the Saxons to make the stuffs and hats of which France had hitherto enjoyed a monopoly. Another planted the first vines in the neighbourhood of the Cape of Good Hope.*

In ordinary circumstances the courts of Spain and of Rome would have eagerly applauded a prince who had made vigorous war on heresy. But such was the hatred inspired by the injustice and haughtiness of Lewis that, when he became a persecutor, the courts of Spain and Rome took the side of religious liberty, and loudly reprobated the cruelty of turning a savage and licentious soldiery loose on an unoffending people.† One cry of grief and rage rose from the whole

* The contemporary tracts in various languages on the subject of this persecution are innumerable. An eminently clear, terse, and spirited summary will be found in Voltaire's Siècle de Louis XIV.

† "Misionarios embotados," says Ronquillo "Apostoli armati," says Innocent. There is, in the Mackintosh Collection, a remarkable letter on this subject from Ronquillo, dated March 26. April 5. 1686. See Venier, Relatione di Francia, 1689, quoted by Professor Ranke in his Römischen Päpste, book viii.

Digitized by Google

of Protestant Europe. The tidings of the revocation of the edict of Nantes reached England about a week before the day to which the Parliament stood adjourned. It was clear then that the spirit of Gardiner and of Alva was still the spirit of the Roman Catholic Church. Lewis was not inferior to James in generosity and humanity, and was certainly far superior to James in all the abilities and acquirements of a statesman. Lewis had, like James, repeatedly promised to respect the privileges of his Protestant subjects. Yet Lewis was now avowedly a persecutor of the reformed religion. What reason was there, then, to doubt that James waited only for an opportunity to follow the example? He was already forming, in defiance of the law, a military force officered to a great extent by Roman Catholics. Was there anything unreasonable in the apprehension that this force might be employed to do what the French dragoons had done?

Effect of that persecution in England.

James was almost as much disturbed as his subjects by the conduct of the court of Versailles. In truth, that court had acted as if it had meant to embarrass and annoy him. He was about to ask from a Protestant legislature a full toleration for Roman Catholics. Nothing, therefore, could be more unwelcome to him than the intelligence that, in a neighbouring country, toleration had just been withdrawn by a Roman Catholic government from Protestants. His vexation was increased by a speech which the Bishop of Valence, in the name of the Gallican clergy, addressed at this time to Lewis the Fourteenth. The pious Sovereign of England, the orator said, looked to the most Christian King for support against a heretical nation. It was remarked that the members of the House of Commons showed particular anxiety to procure copies of this harangue, and that it was read by all Englishmen

Digitized by Google

with indignation and alarm.* James was desirous to counteract the impression which these things had made, and was also at that moment by no means unwilling to let all Europe see that he was not the slave of France. He therefore declared publicly that he disapproved of the manner in which the Huguenots had been treated, granted to the exiles some relief from his privy purse, and, by letters under his great seal, invited his subjects to imitate his liberality. In a very few months it became clear that all this compassion was feigned for the purpose of cajoling his Parliament, that he regarded the refugees with mortal hatred, and that he regretted nothing so much as his own inability to do what Lewis had done.

Meeting of Parliament; speech of the King.

On the ninth of November the Houses met. The Commons were summoned to the bar of the Lords; and the King spoke from the throne. His speech had been composed by himself. He congratulated his loving subjects on the suppression of the rebellion in the West: but he added that the speed with which that rebellion had risen to a formidable height, and the length of time during which it had continued to rage, must convince all men how little dependence could be placed on the militia. He had, therefore, made additions to the regular army. The charge of that army would henceforth be more than double of what it had been; and he trusted that the Commons would grant him the means of defraying the increased expense. He then informed his hearers that he had employed some officers who had not taken the test; but he knew those officers to be fit for public trust. He feared that artful men might avail themselves of this irregularity to disturb the harmony which existed be-

* "Mi dicono che tutti questi parlamentarii ne hanno voluto copia, il che assolutamente avrà causate pessime impressioni."—Adda, Nov. $\frac{8}{18}$. 1685. See Evelyn's Diary, Nov. 3.

Digitized by Google

tween himself and his Parliament. But he would speak out. He was determined not to part with servants on whose fidelity he could rely, and whose help he might perhaps soon need.*

An opposition formed in the House of Commons.

This explicit declaration that he had broken the laws which were regarded by the nation as the chief safeguards of the established religion, and that he was resolved to persist in breaking those laws, was not likely to sooth the excited feelings of his subjects. The Lords, seldom disposed to take the lead in opposition to a government, consented to vote him formal thanks for what he had said. But the Commons were in a less complying mood. When they had returned to their own House there was a long silence; and the faces of many of the most respectable members expressed deep concern. At length Middleton rose and moved the House to go instantly into committee on the King's speech: but Sir Edmund Jennings, a zealous Tory from Yorkshire, who was supposed to speak the sentiments of Danby, protested against this course, and demanded time for consideration. Sir Thomas Clarges, maternal uncle of the Duke of Albemarle, and long distinguished in Parliament as a man of business and a vigilant steward of the public money, took the same side. The feeling of the House could not be mistaken. Sir John Ernley, Chancellor of the Exchequer, insisted that the delay should not exceed forty eight hours: but he was overruled; and it was resolved that the discussion should be postponed for three days.†

The interval was well employed by those who took the lead against the Court. They had indeed no light

* Lords' Journals, Nov. 9. 1685. "Vengo assicurato," says Adda, "che S. M. stessa abbia composto il discorso."—Despatch of Nov. $\frac{19}{29}$. 1685.

† Commons' Journals; Bramston's Memoirs; James Van Leeuwen to the States General, Nov. $\frac{19}{29}$. 1685. Van Leeuwen was secretary of the Dutch embassy, and conducted the correspondence in the absence of Van Citters. As to Clarges, see Burnet, i. 98.

Digitized by Google

work to perform. In three days a country party was to be organised. The difficulty of the task is in our age not easily to be appreciated; for in our age all the nation assists at every deliberation of the Lords and Commons. What is said by the leaders of the ministry and of the opposition after midnight is read by the whole metropolis at dawn, by the inhabitants of Northumberland and Cornwall in the afternoon, and in Ireland and the Highlands of Scotland on the morrow. In our age, therefore, the stages of legislation, the rules of debate, the tactics of faction, the opinions, temper, and style of every active member of either House, are familiar to hundreds of thousands. Every man who now enters Parliament possesses what, in the seventeenth century, would have been called a great stock of parliamentary knowledge. Such knowledge was then to be obtained only by actual parliamentary service. The difference between an old and a new member was as great as the difference between a veteran soldier and a recruit just taken from the plough; and James's Parliament contained a most unusual proportion of new members. who had brought from their country seats to Westminster no political knowledge and many violent prejudices. These gentlemen hated the Papists, but hated the Whigs not less intensely, and regarded the King with superstitious veneration. To form an opposition out of such materials was a feat which required the most skilful and delicate management. Some men of great weight, however, undertook the work, and performed it with success. Several experienced Whig politicians, who had not seats in that Parliament, gave useful advice and information. On the day preceding that which had been fixed for the debate, many meetings were held at which the leaders instructed the novices; and it soon appeared that these exertions had not been thrown away.*

* Barillon, Nov. $\frac{16}{26}$. 1685.

Digitized by Google

Sentiments of foreign governments.

The foreign embassies were all in a ferment. It was well understood that a few days would now decide the great question, whether the King of England was or was not to be the vassal of the King of France. The ministers of the House of Austria were most anxious that James should give satisfaction to his Parliament. Innocent had sent to London two persons charged to inculcate moderation, both by admonition and by example. One of them was John Leyburn, an English Dominican, who had been secretary to Cardinal Howard, and who, with some learning and a rich vein of natural humour, was the most cautious, dexterous, and taciturn of men. He had recently been consecrated Bishop of Adrumetum, and named Vicar Apostolic in Great Britain. Ferdinand, Count of Adda, an Italian of no eminent abilities, but of mild temper and courtly manners, had been appointed Nuncio. These functionaries were eagerly welcomed by James. No Roman Catholic Bishop had exercised spiritual functions in the island during more than half a century. No Nuncio had been received here during the hundred and twenty seven years which had elapsed since the death of Mary. Leyburn was lodged in Whitehall, and received a pension of a thousand pounds a year. Adda did not yet assume a public character. He passed for a foreigner of rank whom curiosity had brought to London, appeared daily at court, and was treated with high consideration. Both the Papal emissaries did their best to diminish, as much as possible, the odium inseparable from the offices which they filled, and to restrain the rash zeal of James. The Nuncio, in particular, declared that nothing could be more injurious to the interests of the Church of Rome than a rupture between the King and the Parliament.*

* Dodd's Church History; Van Leeuwen, Nov. 17. 1685; Barillon, Dec. 24. 1685. Barillon says of Adda, "On l'avoit fait préve-

Digitized by Google

Barillon was active on the other side. The instructions which he received from Versailles on this occasion well deserve to be studied; for they furnish a key to the policy systematically pursued by his master towards England during the twenty years which preceded our revolution. The advices from Madrid, Lewis wrote, were alarming. Strong hopes were entertained there that James would ally himself closely with the House of Austria, as soon as he should be assured that his Parliament would give him no trouble. In these circumstances, it was evidently the interest of France that the Parliament should prove refractory. Barillon was therefore directed to act, with all possible precautions against detection, the part of a makebate. At court he was to omit no opportunity of stimulating the religious zeal and the kingly pride of James; but at the same time it might be desirable to have some secret communication with the malecontents. Such communication would indeed be hazardous, and would require the utmost adroitness: yet it might perhaps be in the power of the Ambassador, without committing himself or his government, to animate the zeal of the opposition for the laws and liberties of England, and to let it be understood that those laws and liberties were not regarded by his master with an unfriendly eye.*

Lewis, when he dictated these instructions, did not foresee how speedily and how completely his uneasiness would be removed by the obstinacy and stupidity of James. On the

Committee of the Commons on the King's speech.

nir que la sureté et l'avantage des Catholiques consistoient dans une réunion entière de sa Majesté Britannique et de son parlement." Letters of Innocent to James, dated $\frac{\text{July 27.}}{\text{Aug. 6.}}$ and $\frac{\text{Sept. 23.}}{\text{Oct. 3.}}$ 1685; Despatches of Adda, Nov. $\frac{9}{19}$. and Nov. $\frac{16}{26}$. 1685. The very interesting correspondence of Adda, copied from the Papal archives, is in the British Museum.

* This most remarkable despatch bears date the $\frac{9}{19}$th of November 1685, and will be found in the Appendix to Mr. Fox's History.

Digitized by Google

twelfth of November the House of Commons resolved itself into a committee on the royal speech. The Solicitor General, Heneage Finch, was in the chair. The debate was conducted by the chiefs of the new country party with rare tact and address. No expression indicating disrespect to the Sovereign or sympathy for rebels was suffered to escape. The Western insurrection was always mentioned with abhorrence. Nothing was said of the barbarities of Kirke and Jeffreys. It was admitted that the heavy expenditure which had been occasioned by the late troubles justified the King in asking some further supply: but strong objections were made to the augmentation of the army and to the infraction of the Test Act.

The subject of the Test Act the courtiers appear to have carefully avoided. They harangued, however, with some force on the great superiority of a regular army to a militia. One of them tauntingly asked whether the defence of the kingdom was to be entrusted to the beefeaters. Another said that he should be glad to know how the Devonshire trainbands, who had fled in confusion before Monmouth's scythemen, would have faced the household troops of Lewis. But these arguments had little effect on Cavaliers who still remembered with bitterness the stern rule of the Protector. The general feeling was forcibly expressed by the first of the Tory country gentlemen of England, Edward Seymour. He admitted that the militia was not in a satisfactory state, but maintained that it might be remodelled. The remodelling might require money: but, for his own part, he would rather give a million to keep up a force from which he had nothing to fear, than half a million to keep up a force of which he must ever be afraid. Let the trainbands be disciplined: let the navy be strengthened; and the country would be secure. A standing

Digitized by Google

army was at best a mere drain on the public resources. The soldier was withdrawn from all useful labour. He produced nothing: he consumed the fruits of the industry of other men; and he domineered over those by whom he was supported. But the nation was now threatened, not only with a standing army, but with a Popish standing army, with a standing army officered by men who might be very amiable and honourable, but who were on principle enemies to the constitution of the realm. Sir William Twisden, member for the county of Kent, spoke on the same side with great keenness and loud applause. Sir Richard Temple, one of the few Whigs who had a seat in that Parliament, dexterously accommodating his speech to the temper of his audience, reminded the House that a standing army had been found, by experience, to be as dangerous to the just authority of princes as to the liberty of nations. Sir John Maynard, the most learned lawyer of his time, took part in the debate. He was now more than eighty years old, and could well remember the political contests of the reign of James the First. He had sate in the Long Parliament, and had taken part with the Roundheads, but had always been for lenient counsels, and had laboured to bring about a general reconciliation. His abilities, which age had not impaired, and his professional knowledge, which had long overawed all Westminster Hall, commanded the ear of the House of Commons. He, too, declared himself against the augmentation of the regular forces.

After much debate, it was resolved that a supply should be granted to the Crown; but it was also resolved that a bill should be brought in for making the militia more efficient. This last resolution was tantamount to a declaration against the standing army. The King was greatly displeased; and it was

Digitized by Google

whispered that, if things went on thus, the session would not be of long duration.*

On the morrow the contention was renewed. The language of the country party was perceptibly bolder and sharper than on the preceding day. That paragraph of the King's speech which related to supply preceded the paragraph which related to the test. On this ground Middleton proposed that the paragraph relating to supply should be first considered in committee. The opposition moved the previous question. They contended that the reasonable and constitutional practice was to grant no money till grievances had been redressed, and that there would be an end of this practice if the House thought itself bound servilely to follow the order in which matters were mentioned by the King from the throne.

The division was taken on the question whether Middleton's motion should be put. The Noes were ordered by the Speaker to go forth into the lobby. They resented this much, and complained loudly of his servility and partiality: for they conceived that, according to the intricate and subtle rule which was then in force, and which, in our time, was superseded by a more rational and convenient practice, they were entitled to keep their seats; and it was held by all the parliamentary tacticians of that age that the

* Commons' Journals, Nov. 12. 1685; Van Leeuwen, Nov. $\frac{13}{23}$.; Barillon, Nov. $\frac{16}{26}$.; Sir John Bramston's Memoirs. The best report of the debates of the Commons in November 1685, is one of which the history is somewhat curious. There are two manuscript copies of it in the British Museum, Harl. 7187.; Lans. 253. In these copies the names of the speakers are given at length. The author of the Life of James published in 1702 transcribed this report, but gave only the initials of the speakers. The editors of Chandler's Debates and of the Parliamentary History guessed from these initials at the names, and sometimes guessed wrong. They ascribe to Waller a very remarkable speech, which will hereafter be mentioned, and which was really made by Windham, member for Salisbury. It was with some concern that I found myself forced to give up the belief that the last words uttered in public by Waller were so honourable to him.

Digitized by Google

party which stayed in the House had an advantage over the party which went out; for the accommodation on the benches was then so deficient that no person who had been fortunate enough to get a good seat was willing to lose it. Nevertheless, to the dismay of the ministers, many persons on whose votes the Court had absolutely depended were seen moving towards the door. Among them was Charles Fox, Paymaster of the Forces, and son of Sir Stephen Fox, Clerk of the Green Cloth. The Paymaster had been induced by his friends to absent himself during part of the discussion. But his anxiety had become insupportable. He came down to the Speaker's chamber, heard part of the debate, withdrew, and, after hesitating for an hour or two between conscience and five thousand pounds a year, took a manly resolution and rushed into the House just in time to vote. Two officers of the army, Colonel John Darcy son of the Lord Conyers, and Captain James Kendall, withdrew to the lobby. Middleton went down to the bar and expostulated warmly with them. He particularly addressed himself to Kendall, a needy retainer of the Court, who had, in obedience to the royal mandate, been sent to Parliament by a packed corporation in Cornwall, and who had recently obtained a grant of a hundred head of rebels sentenced to transportation. "Sir," said Middleton, "have not you a troop of horse in His Majesty's service?" "Yes, my Lord," answered Kendall: "but my elder brother is just dead, and has left me seven hundred a year."

When the tellers had done their office it appeared that the Ayes were one hundred and eighty two, and the Noes one hundred and eighty three. In that House of Commons which had been brought together by the unscrupulous use of chicanery, of corruption, and of violence, in that House of Commons of which James had said that more than eleven twelfths of the members were such

Defeat of the government.

Digitized by Google

as he would himself have nominated, the Court had sustained a defeat on a vital question.*

In consequence of this vote the expressions which the King had used respecting the test were taken into consideration. It was resolved, after much discussion, that an address should be presented to him, reminding him that he could not legally continue to employ officers who refused to qualify, and pressing him to give such directions as might quiet the apprehensions and jealousies of his people.†

A motion was then made that the Lords should be requested to join in the address. Whether this motion was honestly made by the opposition, in the hope that the concurrence of the peers would add weight to the remonstrance, or artfully made by the courtiers, in the hope that a breach between the Houses might be the consequence, it is now impossible to discover. The proposition was rejected.‡

* Commons' Journals, Nov. 13. 1685; Bramston's Memoirs; Reresby's Memoirs; Barillon, Nov. $\frac{16}{26}$.; Van Leeuwen, Nov. $\frac{13}{23}$.; Memoirs of Sir Stephen Fox, 1717; The Case of the Church of England fairly stated; Burnet, i. 666. and Speaker Onslow's note.

† Commons' Journals, Nov. 13. 1685; Harl. MS. 7187.; Lansdowne MS. 253.

‡ The conflict of testimony on this subject is most extraordinary; and, after long consideration, I must own that the balance seems to me to be exactly poised. In the Life of James (1702), the motion is represented as a court motion. This account is confirmed by a remarkable passage in the Stuart Papers, which was corrected by the Pretender himself. (Life of James the Second, ii. 55.) On the other hand, Reresby, who was present, and Barillon, who ought to have been well informed, represent the motion as an opposition motion. The Harleian and Lansdowne manuscripts differ in the single word on which the whole depends. Unfortunately Bramston was not at the House that day. James Van Leeuwen mentions the motion and the division, but does not add a word which can throw the smallest light on the state of parties. I must own myself unable to draw with confidence any inference from the names of the tellers, Sir Joseph Williamson and Sir Francis Russell for the majority, and Lord Ancram and Sir Henry Goodricke for the minority. I should have thought Lord Ancram likely to go with the court, and Sir Henry Goodricke likely to go with the opposition.

Digitized by Google

The House then resolved itself into a committee, for the purpose of considering the amount of supply to be granted. The King wanted fourteen hundred thousand pounds: but the ministers saw that it would be vain to ask for so large a sum. The Chancellor of the Exchequer mentioned twelve hundred thousand pounds. The chiefs of the opposition replied that to vote for such a grant would be to vote for the permanence of the present military establishment: they were disposed to give only so much as might suffice to keep the regular troops on foot till the militia could be remodelled; and they therefore proposed four hundred thousand pounds. The courtiers exclaimed against this motion as unworthy of the House and disrespectful to the King: but they were manfully encountered. One of the western members, John Windham, who sate for Salisbury, especially distinguished himself. He had always, he said, looked with dread and aversion on standing armies; and recent experience had strengthened those feelings. He then ventured to touch on a theme which had hitherto been studiously avoided. He described the desolation of the western counties. The people, he said, were weary of the oppression of the troops, weary of free quarters, of depredations, of still fouler crimes which the law called felonies, but for which, when perpetrated by this class of felons, no redress could be obtained. The King's servants had indeed told the House that excellent rules had been laid down for the government of the army; but none could venture to say that these rules had been observed. What, then, was the inevitable inference? Did not the contrast between the paternal injunctions issued from the throne and the insupportable tyranny of the soldiers prove that the army was even now too strong for the prince as well as for the people? The Commons might surely, with perfect consistency, while they reposed entire

Digitized by Google

confidence in the intentions of His Majesty, refuse to make any addition to a force which it was clear that His Majesty could not manage.

Second defeat of the government.

The motion that the sum to be granted should not exceed four hundred thousand pounds, was lost by twelve votes. This victory of the ministers was little better than a defeat. The leaders of the country party, nothing disheartened, retreated a little, made another stand, and proposed the sum of seven hundred thousand pounds. The committee divided again, and the courtiers were beaten by two hundred and twelve votes to one hundred and seventy.*

The King reprimands the Commons.

On the following day the Commons went in procession to Whitehall with their address on the subject of the test. The King received them on his throne. The address was drawn up in respectful and affectionate language; for the great majority of those who had voted for it were zealously and even superstitiously loyal, and had readily agreed to insert some complimentary phrases, and to omit every word which the courtiers thought offensive. The answer of James was a cold and sullen reprimand. He declared himself greatly displeased and amazed that the Commons should have profited so little by the admonition which he had given them. "But," said he, "however you may proceed on your part, I will be very steady in all the promises which I have made to you."†

The Commons reassembled in their chamber, discontented, yet somewhat overawed. To most of them the King was still an object of filial reverence. Three more years filled with bitter injuries, and with not less bitter insults, were scarcely sufficient to dissolve the ties which bound the Cavalier gentry to the throne.

* Commons' Journals, Nov. 16. 1685; Harl. MS. 7187.; Lansdowne MS. 235.

† Commons' Journals, Nov. 17, 18. 1685

Digitized by Google

The Speaker repeated the substance of the King's reply. There was, for some time, a solemn stillness: then the order of the day was read in regular course; and the House went into committee on the bill for remodelling the militia.

Coke committed by the Commons for disrespect to the King.

In a few hours, however, the spirit of the opposition revived. When, at the close of the day, the Speaker resumed the chair, Wharton, the boldest and most active of the Whigs, proposed that a time should be appointed for taking His Majesty's answer into consideration. John Coke, member for Derby, though a noted Tory, seconded Wharton. "I hope," he said, "that we are all Englishmen, and that we shall not be frightened from our duty by a few high words."

It was manfully, but not wisely, spoken. The whole House was in a tempest. "Take down his words," "To the bar," "To the Tower," resounded from every side. Those who were most lenient proposed that the offender should be reprimanded: but the ministers vehemently insisted that he should be sent to prison. The House might pardon, they said, offences committed against itself, but had no right to pardon an insult offered to the Crown. Coke was sent to the Tower. The indiscretion of one man had deranged the whole system of tactics which had been so ably concerted by the chiefs of the opposition. It was in vain that, at that moment, Edward Seymour attempted to rally his followers, exhorted them to fix a day for discussing the King's answer, and expressed his confidence that the discussion would be conducted with the respect due from subjects to the sovereign. The members were so much cowed by the royal displeasure, and so much incensed by the rudeness of Coke, that it would not have been safe to divide.*

The House adjourned; and the ministers flattered

* Commons' Journals, Nov. 18. 1685; Harl. MS. 7187.; Lansdowne MS. 253.; Burnet, i. 667.

Digitized by Google

themselves that the spirit of opposition was quelled. But on the morrow, the nineteenth of November, new and alarming symptoms appeared. The time had arrived for taking into consideration the petitions which had been presented from all parts of England against the late elections. When, on the first meeting of the Parliament, Seymour had complained of the force and fraud by which the government had prevented the sense of constituent bodies from being fairly taken, he had found no seconder. But many who had then flinched from his side had subsequently taken heart, and, with Sir John Lowther, member for Cumberland, at their head, had, before the recess, suggested that there ought to be an enquiry into the abuses which had so much excited the public mind. The House was now in a much more angry temper; and many voices were boldly raised in menace and accusation. The ministers were told that the nation expected, and should have, signal redress. Meanwhile it was dexterously intimated that the best atonement which a gentleman who had been brought into the House by irregular means could make to the public was to use his ill acquired power in defence of the religion and liberties of his country. No member, who, in that crisis, did his duty, had anything to fear. It might be necessary to unseat him; but the whole influence of the opposition should be employed to procure his reelection.*

Opposition to the government in the Lords. The Earl of Devonshire.

On the same day it became clear that the spirit of opposition had spread from the Commons to the Lords, and even to the episcopal bench. William Cavendish, Earl of Devonshire, took the lead in the Upper

* Lonsdale's Memoirs. Burnet tells us (i. 667.) that a sharp debate about elections took place in the House of Commons after Coke's committal. It must therefore have been on the 19th of November; for Coke was committed late on the 18th, and the Parliament was prorogued on the 20th. Burnet's narrative is confirmed by the Journals, from which it appears that several

Digitized by Google

House; and he was well qualified to do so. In wealth and influence he was second to none of the English nobles; and the general voice designated him as the finest gentleman of his time. His magnificence, his taste, his talents, his classical learning, his high spirit, the grace and urbanity of his manners, were admitted by his enemies. His eulogists, unhappily, could not pretend that his morals had escaped untainted from the widespread contagion of that age. Though an enemy of Popery and of arbitrary power, he had been averse to extreme courses, had been willing, when the Exclusion Bill was lost, to agree to a compromise, and had never been concerned in the illegal and imprudent schemes which had brought discredit on the Whig party. But, while blaming part of the conduct of his friends, he had not failed to perform zealously the most arduous and perilous duties of friendship. He had stood near Russell at the bar, had parted from him on the sad morning of the execution with close embraces and with many bitter tears, nay, had offered to manage an escape at the hazard of his own life.* This great nobleman now proposed that a day should be fixed for considering the royal speech. It was contended, on the other side, that the Lords, by voting thanks for the speech, had precluded themselves from complaining of it. But this objection was treated with contempt by Halifax. "Such thanks," he said with the sarcastic pleasantry in which he excelled, "imply no approbation. We are thankful whenever our gracious Sovereign deigns to speak to us. Especially thankful are we when, as on the present occasion, he speaks out,

elections were under discussion on the 19th.

* Burnet, i. 560.; Funeral Sermon of the Duke of Devonshire, preached by Kennet, 1708; Travels of Cosmo III. in England; The Hazard of a Death-bed Repentance argued from the Remorse of Conscience of W ——, late D —— of D ——, when dying a most absurd pamphlet by John Dunton which reached a tenth edition.

Digitized by Google

and gives us fair warning of what we are to suffer." *

The Bishop of London.

Doctor Henry Compton, Bishop of London, spoke strongly for the motion. Though not gifted with eminent abilities, nor deeply versed in the learning of his profession, he was always heard by the House with respect; for he was one of the few clergymen who could, in that age, boast of noble blood. His own loyalty, and the loyalty of his family, had been signally proved. His father, the second Earl of Northampton, had fought bravely for King Charles the First, and, surrounded by the parliamentary soldiers, had fallen, sword in hand, refusing to give or take quarter. The Bishop himself, before he was ordained, had borne arms in the Guards; and, though he generally did his best to preserve the gravity and sobriety befitting a prelate, some flashes of his military spirit would, to the last, occasionally break forth. He had been entrusted with the religious education of the two Princesses, and had acquitted himself of that important duty in a manner which had satisfied all good Protestants, and had secured to him considerable influence over the minds of his pupils, especially of the Lady Anne.† He now declared that he was empowered to speak the sense of his brethren, and that, in their opinion and in his own, the whole civil and ecclesiastical constitution of the realm was in danger.

Viscount Mordaunt.

One of the most remarkable speeches of that day was made by a young man, whose eccentric career was destined to amaze Europe. This was Charles Mordaunt, Viscount Mordaunt, widely renowned, many years later, as Earl of Peterborough. Already he had given abundant proofs of

* Bramston's Memoirs. Burnet is incorrect both as to the time when the remark was made and as to the person who made it. In Halifax's Letter to a Dissenter will be found a remarkable allusion to this discussion.

† Wood, Ath. Ox.; Gooch's Funeral Sermon on Bishop Compton.

Digitized by Google

his courage, of his capacity, and of that strange unsoundness of mind which made his courage and capacity almost useless to his country. Already he had distinguished himself as a wit and a scholar, as a soldier and a sailor. He had even set his heart on rivalling Bourdaloue and Bossuet. Though an avowed freethinker, he had sate up all night at sea to compose sermons, and had with great difficulty been prevented from edifying the crew of a man of war with his pious oratory.* He now addressed the House of Peers, for the first time, with characteristic eloquence, sprightliness, and audacity. He blamed the Commons for not having taken a bolder line. "They have been afraid," he said, "to speak out. They have talked of apprehensions and jealousies. What have apprehension and jealousy to do here? Apprehension and jealousy are the feelings with which we regard future and uncertain evils. The evil which we are considering is neither future nor uncertain. A standing army exists. It is officered by Papists. We have no foreign enemy. There is no rebellion in the land. For what, then, is this force maintained, except for the purpose of subverting our laws, and establishing that arbitrary power which is so justly abhorred by Englishmen?"†

Jeffreys spoke against the motion in the coarse and savage style of which he was a master; but he soon found that it was not quite so easy to browbeat

* Teonge's Diary.

† Barillon has given the best account of this debate. I will extract his report of Mordaunt's speech. "Milord Mordaunt, quoique jeune, parla avec éloquence et force. Il dit que la question n'étoit pas réduite, comme la Chambre des Communes le prétendoit, à guérir des jalousies et défiances, qui avoient lieu dans les choses incertaines; mais que ce qui se passoit ne l'étoit pas, qu'il y avoit une armée sur pied qui subsistoit, et qui étoit remplie d'officiers Catholiques, qui ne pouvoit être conservée que pour le renversement des loix, et que la subsistance de l'armée, quand il n'y a aucune guerre ni au dedans ni au dehors, étoit l'établissement du gouvernement arbitraire, pour lequel les Anglois ont une aversion si bien fondée."

Digitized by Google

the proud and powerful barons of England in their own hall as to intimidate advocates whose bread depended on his favour or prisoners whose necks were at his mercy. A man whose life has been passed in attacking and domineering, whatever may be his talents and courage, generally makes a poor figure when he is vigorously assailed: for, being unaccustomed to stand on the defensive, he becomes confused; and the knowledge that all those whom he has insulted are enjoying his confusion confuses him still more. Jeffreys was now, for the first time since he had become a great man, encountered on equal terms by adversaries who did not fear him. To the general delight, he passed at once from the extreme of insolence to the extreme of meanness, and could not refrain from weeping with rage and vexation.* Nothing indeed was wanting to his humiliation; for the House was crowded by about a hundred peers, a larger number than had voted even on the great day of the Exclusion Bill. The King, too, was present. His brother had been in the habit of attending the sittings of the Lords for amusement, and used often to say that a debate was as entertaining as a comedy. James came, not to be diverted, but in the hope that his presence might impose some restraint on the discussion. He was disappointed. The sense of the House was so strongly manifested that, after a closing speech, of great keenness, from Halifax, the courtiers did not venture to divide. An early day was fixed for taking the royal speech into consideration; and it was ordered that every peer

* He was very easily moved to tears. "He could not," says the author of the Panegyric, "refrain from weeping on bold affronts." And again: "They talk of his hectoring and proud carriage; what could be more humble than for a man in his great post to cry and sob?" In the Answer to the Panegyric it is said that "his having no command of his tears spoiled him for a hypocrite."

Digitized by Google

who was in or near the capital should be in his place.*

On the following morning the King came down, in his robes, to the House of Lords. The Usher of the Black Rod summoned the Commons to the bar; and the Chancellor announced that the Parliament was prorogued to the tenth of February.† The members who had voted against the Court were dismissed from the public service. Charles Fox quitted the Pay Office: the Bishop of London ceased to be Dean of the Chapel Royal; and his name was struck out of the list of Privy Councillors. Prorogation.

The effect of the prorogation was to put an end to a legal proceeding of the highest importance. Thomas Grey, Earl of Stamford, sprung from one of the most illustrious houses of England, had been recently arrested and committed close prisoner to the Tower on a charge of high treason. He was accused of having been concerned in the Rye House plot. A true bill had been found against him by the grand jury of the City of London, and had been removed into the House of Lords, the only court before which a temporal peer can, during a session of Parliament, be arraigned for any offence higher than a misdemeanour. The first of December had been fixed for the trial; and orders had been given that Westminster Hall should be fitted up with seats and hangings. In consequence of the prorogation, the

* Lords' Journals, Nov. 19. 1685; Barillon, $\frac{\text{Nov. 23.}}{\text{Dec. 3.}}$; Dutch Despatch, Nov. $\frac{20}{30}$; Luttrell's Diary, Nov. 19.; Burnet, i. 665. The closing speech of Halifax is mentioned by the Nuncio in his despatch of Nov. $\frac{16}{26}$. Adda, about a month later, bears strong testimony to Halifax's powers. "Da questo uomo che ha gran credito nel parlamento, e grande eloquenza, non si possono attendere che fiere contradizioni, e nel partito Regio non vi è un uomo da contrapporsi." Dec. $\frac{3}{13}$.

† Lords' and Commons' Journals, Nov. 20. 1685.

Digitized by Google

hearing of the cause was postponed for an indefinite period; and Stamford soon regained his liberty.*

Three other Whigs of great eminence were in confinement when the session closed, Charles Gerard, Lord Gerard of Brandon, eldest son of the Earl of Macclesfield, John Hampden, grandson of the renowned leader of the Long Parliament, and Henry Booth, Lord Delamere. Gerard and Hampden were accused of having taken part in the Rye House plot, Delamere of having abetted the Western insurrection.

Trials of Lord Gerard and of Hampden.

It was not the intention of the government to put either Gerard or Hampden to death. Grey had stipulated for their lives before he consented to become a witness against them.† But there was a still stronger reason for sparing them. They were heirs to large property: but their fathers were still living. The Court could therefore get little in the way of forfeiture, and might get much in the way of ransom. Gerard was tried, and, from the very scanty accounts which have come down to us, seems to have defended himself with great spirit and force. He boasted of the exertions and sacrifices made by his family in the cause of Charles the First, and proved Rumsey, the witness who had murdered Russell by telling one story and Cornish by telling another, to be utterly undeserving of credit. The jury, with some hesitation, found a verdict of Guilty. After long imprisonment Gerard was suffered to redeem himself.‡ Hampden had inherited the political opinions and a large share of the abilities of his grandfather, but had degenerated from the uprightness and the courage by which his grandfather had been distinguished. It appears that the prisoner was, with cruel cunning, long kept in an agony of suspense, in order that his family might be

* Lords' Journals, Nov. 11. 17. 18. 1685.

† Burnet, i. 646.

‡ Bramston's Memoirs; Luttrell's Diary.

Digitized by Google

induced to pay largely for mercy. His spirit sank under the terrors of death. When brought to the bar of the Old Bailey, he not only pleaded guilty, but disgraced the illustrious name which he bore by abject submissions and entreaties. He protested that he had not been privy to the design of assassination; but he owned that he had meditated rebellion, professed deep repentance for his offence, implored the intercession of the Judges, and vowed that, if the royal clemency were extended to him, his whole life should be passed in evincing his gratitude for such goodness. The Whigs were furious at his pusillanimity, and loudly declared him to be far more deserving of blame than Grey, who, even in turning King's evidence, had preserved a certain decorum. Hampden's life was spared; but his family paid several thousand pounds to the Chancellor. Some courtiers of less note succeeded in extorting smaller sums. The unhappy man had spirit enough to feel keenly the degradation to which he had stooped. He survived the day of his ignominy several years. He lived to see his party triumphant, to be once more an important member of it, and to make his persecutors tremble in their turn. But his prosperity was embittered by one insupportable recollection. He never regained his cheerfulness, and at length died by his own hand.*

Trial of Delamere.

That Delamere, if he had needed the royal mercy, would have found it, is not very probable. It is certain that every advantage which the letter of the law gave to the government was used against him without scruple or shame. He was in a different situation from that in which Stamford stood. The indictment against Stamford had been removed into the House of Lords during the session of Parliament, and therefore could not be prosecuted till the

* See the trial in the Collection of State Trials; Bramston's Memoirs; Burnet, i. 647.; Lords' Journals, Dec. 20. 1689.

Digitized by Google

Parliament should reassemble. All the peers would then have voices, and would be judges as well of law as of fact. But the bill against Delamere was not found till after the prorogation.* He was therefore within the jurisdiction of the Court to which belongs, during a recess of Parliament, the cognisance of treasons and felonies committed by temporal peers; and this Court was then so constituted that no prisoner charged with a political offence could expect an impartial trial. The King named a Lord High Steward. The Lord High Steward named, at his discretion, certain peers to sit on their accused brother. The number to be summoned was indefinite. No challenge was allowed. A simple majority, provided that it consisted of twelve, was sufficient to convict. The High Steward was sole judge of the law; and the Lords Triers formed merely a jury to pronounce on the question of fact. Jeffreys was appointed High Steward. He selected thirty Triers; and the selection was characteristic of the man and of the times. All the thirty were in politics vehemently opposed to the prisoner. Fifteen of them were colonels of regiments, and might be removed from their lucrative commands at the pleasure of the King. Among the remaining fifteen were the Lord Treasurer, the principal Secretary of State, the Steward of the Household, the Comptroller of the Household, the Captain of the Band of Gentlemen Pensioners, the Queen's Chamberlain, and other persons who were bound by strong ties of interest to the government. Nevertheless, Delamere had some great advantages over the humbler culprits who had been arraigned at the Old Bailey. There the jurymen, violent partisans, taken for a single day by courtly Sheriffs from the mass of society and speedily sent back to mingle with that mass, were under no restraint of shame, and being little ac-

* Lords' Journals, Nov. 9, 10. 16. 1685.

Digitized by Google

customed to weigh evidence, followed without scruple the directions of the bench. But in the High Steward's Court every Trier was a man of some experience in grave affairs. Every Trier filled a considerable space in the public eye. Every Trier, beginning from the lowest, had to rise separately and to give in his verdict, on his honour, before a great concourse. That verdict, accompanied with his name, would go to every part of the world, and would live in history. Moreover, though the selected nobles were all Tories, and almost all placemen, many of them had begun to look with uneasiness on the King's proceedings, and to doubt whether the case of Delamere might not soon be their own.

Jeffreys conducted himself, as was his wont, insolently and unjustly. He had indeed an old grudge to stimulate his zeal. He had been Chief Justice of Chester when Delamere, then Mr. Booth, represented that county in Parliament. Booth had bitterly complained to the Commons that the dearest interests of his constituents were entrusted to a drunken jackpudding.* The revengeful judge was now not ashamed to resort to artifices which even in an advocate would have been culpable. He reminded the Lords Triers, in very significant language, that Delamere had, in Parliament, objected to the bill for attainting Monmouth, a fact which was not, and could not be, in evidence. But it was not in the power of Jeffreys to overawe a synod of peers as he had been in the habit of overawing common juries. The evidence for the crown would probably have been thought amply sufficient on the Western Circuit, or at the City Sessions, but could not for a moment impose on such men as Rochester, Godolphin, and Churchill; nor were they, with all their faults, depraved enough to condemn a fellow creature to death against the plain-

* Speech on the Corruption of the Judges in Lord Delamere's works, 1694.

Digitized by Google

est rules of justice. Grey, Wade, and Goodenough were produced, but could only repeat what they had heard said by Monmouth and by Wildman's emissaries. The principal witness for the prosecution, a miscreant named Saxton, who had been concerned in the rebellion, and who was now labouring to earn his pardon by swearing against all who were obnoxious to the government, was proved by overwhelming evidence to have told a series of falsehoods. All the Triers, from Churchill, who, as junior baron, spoke first, up to the Treasurer, pronounced, on their honour, that Delamere was not guilty. The gravity and pomp of the whole proceeding made a deep impression even on the Nuncio, accustomed as he was to the ceremonies of Rome, ceremonies which, in solemnity and splendour, exceed all that the rest of the world can show.* The King, who was present, and was unable to complain of a decision evidently just, went into a rage with Saxton, and vowed that the wretch should first be pilloried before Westminster Hall for perjury, and then sent down to the West to be hanged, drawn, and quartered for treason.†

Effect of his acquittal.

The public joy at the acquittal of Delamere was great. The reign of terror was over. The innocent began to breathe freely, and false accusers to tremble. One letter written on this occasion is scarcely to be read without tears. The widow of Russell, in her retirement, learned the good news with mingled feelings. "I do bless God," she wrote, "that he has caused some stop to be put to the shedding of blood in this poor land. Yet, when I should rejoice with them that do rejoice, I seek a corner to weep in. I find I am capable of no more gladness; but every new circumstance, the very comparing my night of sorrow, after such a day, with

* "Fu una funzione piena di gravità, di ordine, e di gran speciosità."—Adda, Jan. $\frac{14}{24}$. 1686.

† The Trial is in the Collection of State Trials. Van Leeuwen, Jan. $\frac{13}{23}$. $\frac{18}{28}$. 1686.

Digitized by Google

theirs of joy, does, from a reflection of one kind or another, rack my uneasy mind. Though I am far from wishing the close of theirs like mine, yet I cannot refrain giving some time to lament mine was not like theirs." *

And now the tide was on the turn. The death of Stafford, witnessed with signs of tenderness and remorse by the populace to whose rage he was sacrificed, marks the close of one proscription. The acquittal of Delamere marks the close of another. The crimes which had disgraced the stormy tribuneship of Shaftesbury had been fearfully expiated. The blood of innocent Papists had been avenged more than tenfold by the blood of zealous Protestants. Another great reaction had commenced. Factions were fast taking new forms. Old allies were separating. Old enemies were uniting. Discontent was spreading fast through all the ranks of the party lately dominant. A hope, still indeed faint and indefinite, of victory and revenge, animated the party which had lately seemed to be extinct. With such omens the eventful and troubled year 1685 terminated, and the year 1686 began.

Parties in the court.

The prorogation had relieved the King from the gentle remonstrances of the Houses: but he had still to listen to remonstrances, similar in substance, though uttered in a tone even more cautious and subdued. Some men, who had hitherto served him but too strenuously for their own fame and for the public welfare, had begun to feel painful misgivings, and occasionally ventured to hint a small part of what they felt.

Feeling of the Protestant Tories.

During many years the zeal of the English Tory for hereditary monarchy and his zeal for the established religion had grown up together and had strengthened each other. It had never occurred to him that the two sentiments,

* Lady Russell to Dr. Fitzwilliam, Jan. 15. 1686.

Digitized by Google

which seemed inseparable and even identical, might one day be found to be not only distinct but incompatible. From the commencement of the strife between the Stuarts and the Commons, the cause of the crown and the cause of the hierarchy had, to all appearance, been one. Charles the First was regarded by the Church as her own martyr. If Charles the Second had plotted against her, he had plotted in secret. In public he had ever professed himself her grateful and devoted son, had knelt at her altars, and, in spite of his loose morals, had succeeded in persuading the great body of her adherents that he felt a sincere preference for her. Whatever conflicts, therefore, the honest Cavalier might have had to maintain against Whigs and Roundheads, he had at least been hitherto undisturbed by conflict in his own mind. He had seen the path of duty plain before him. Through good and evil he was to be true to Church and King. But, if those two august and venerable powers, which had hitherto seemed to be so closely connected that those who were true to one could not be false to the other, should be divided by a deadly enmity, what course was the orthodox Royalist to take? What situation could be more trying than that of a man distracted between two duties equally sacred, between two affections equally ardent? How would it be possible to give to Cæsar all that was Cæsar's, and yet to withhold from God no part of what was God's? None who felt thus could have watched, without deep concern and gloomy forebodings, the dispute between the King and the Parliament on the subject of the test. If James could even now be induced to reconsider his course, to let the Houses reassemble, and to comply with their wishes, all might yet be well.

Such were the sentiments of the King's two kinsmen, the Earls of Clarendon and Rochester. The power and favour of these noblemen seemed to be

Digitized by Google

great indeed. The younger brother was Lord Treasurer and prime minister; and the elder, after holding the Privy Seal during some months, had been appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. The venerable Ormond took the same side. Middleton and Preston, who, as managers of the House of Commons, had recently learned by proof how dear the established religion was to the loyal gentry of England, were also for moderate counsels.

At the very beginning of the new year these statesmen and the great party which they represented had to suffer a cruel mortification. That the late King had been at heart a Roman Catholic had been, during some months, suspected and whispered, but not formally announced. The disclosure, indeed, could not be made without great scandal. Charles had, times without number, declared himself a Protestant, and had been in the habit of receiving the Eucharist from the Bishops. Those Churchmen who had stood by him in his difficulties, and who still cherished an affectionate remembrance of him, must be filled with shame and indignation by learning that his whole life had been a lie, that, while he professed to belong to their communion, he had really regarded them as heretics, and that the demagogues who had represented him as a concealed Papist had been the only people who had formed a correct judgment of his character. Even Lewis understood enough of the state of public feeling in England to be aware that the divulging of the truth might do harm, and had, of his own accord, promised to keep the conversion of Charles strictly secret.* James, while his power was still new, had thought that on this point it was advisable to be cautious, and had not ventured to inter his brother with the rites of the Church of Rome. For a time, therefore, every

* Lewis to Barillon, Feb. $\frac{10}{20}$. 168$\frac{5}{6}$.

Digitized by Google

man was at liberty to believe what he wished. The Papists claimed the deceased prince as their proselyte. The Whigs execrated him as a hypocrite and a renegade. The Tories regarded the report of his apostasy as a calumny which Papists and Whigs had, for very different reasons, a common interest in circulating.

Publication of papers found in the strong box of Charles II.

James now took a step which greatly disconcerted the whole Anglican party. Two papers, in which were set forth very concisely the arguments ordinarily used by Roman Catholics against Protestants, had been found in Charles's strong box, and appeared to be in his handwriting. These papers James showed triumphantly to several Protestants, and declared that, to his knowledge, his brother had lived and died a Roman Catholic.* One of the persons to whom the manuscripts were exhibited was Archbishop Sancroft. He read them with much emotion, and remained silent. Such silence was only the natural effect of a struggle between respect and vexation. But James supposed that the Primate was struck dumb by the irresistible force of reason, and eagerly challenged His Grace to produce, with the help of the whole episcopal bench, a satisfactory reply. "Let me have a solid answer, and in a gentlemanlike style; and it may have the effect which you so much desire of bringing me over to your Church." The Archbishop mildly said that, in his opinion, such an answer might, without much difficulty, be written, but declined the controversy on the plea of reverence for the memory of his deceased master. This plea the King considered as the subterfuge of a vanquished disputant.† Had His Majesty been well acquainted with the polemical literature of the preceding century and a half, he would have known that the documents to which he attached so much value might have been composed by any lad of fifteen

* Evelyn's Diary, October 2. 1685.

† Life of James the Second, ii. 9. Orig. Mem.

Digitized by Google

in the college of Douay, and contained nothing which had not, in the opinion of all Protestant divines, been ten thousand times refuted. In his ignorant exultation, he ordered these tracts to be printed with the utmost pomp of typography, and appended to them a declaration attested by his sign manual, and certifying that the originals were in his brother's own hand. James himself distributed the whole edition among his courtiers and among the people of humbler rank who crowded round his coach. He gave one copy to a young woman of mean condition whom he supposed to be of his own religious persuasion, and assured her that she would be greatly edified and comforted by the perusal. In requital of his kindness, she delivered to him, a few days later, an epistle adjuring him to come out of the mystical Babylon and to dash from his lips the cup of fornications.*

Feeling of the respectable Roman Catholics.

These things gave great uneasiness to Tory churchmen. Nor were the most respectable Roman Catholic noblemen much better pleased. They might indeed have been excused if passion had, at this conjuncture, made them deaf to the voice of prudence and justice; for they had suffered much. Protestant jealousy had degraded them from the rank to which they were born, had closed the doors of the Parliament House on the heirs of barons who had signed the Charter, had pronounced the command of a company of foot too high a trust for the descendants of the generals who had conquered at Flodden and Saint Quentin. There was scarcely one eminent peer attached to the old faith whose honour, whose estate, whose life had not been in jeopardy, who had not passed months in the Tower, who had not often anticipated for himself the fate of Stafford. Men who had been so long and

* Van Leeuwen, Jan. $\frac{1}{11}$ and $\frac{11}{21}$. 1686. Her letter, though very long and very absurd, was thought worth sending to the States General as a sign of the times

Digitized by Google

cruelly oppressed might have been pardoned if they had eagerly seized the first opportunity of obtaining at once greatness and revenge. But neither fanaticism nor ambition, neither resentment for past wrongs nor the intoxication produced by sudden good fortune, could prevent the most distinguished Roman Catholics from perceiving that the prosperity which they at length enjoyed was only temporary, and, unless wisely used, might be fatal to them. They had been taught, by a cruel experience, that the antipathy of the nation to their religion was not a fancy which would yield to the mandate of a prince, but a profound sentiment, the growth of five generations, diffused through all ranks and parties, and intertwined not less closely with the principles of the Tory than with the principles of the Whig. It was indeed in the power of the King, by the exercise of his prerogative of mercy, to suspend the operation of the penal laws. It might hereafter be in his power, by discreet management, to obtain from the Parliament a repeal of the acts which imposed civil disabilities on those who professed his religion. But, if he attempted to subdue the Protestant feeling of England by rude means, it was easy to see that the violent compression of so powerful and elastic a spring would be followed by as violent a recoil. The Roman Catholic peers, by prematurely attempting to force their way into the Privy Council and the House of Lords, might lose their mansions and their ample estates, and might end their lives as traitors on Tower Hill, or as beggars at the porches of Italian convents.

Such was the feeling of William Herbert, Earl of Powis, who was generally regarded as the chief of the Roman Catholic aristocracy, and who, according to Oates, was to have been prime minister if the Popish plot had succeeded. John Lord Bellasyse took the same view of the state of affairs. In his youth he

Digitized by Google

had fought gallantly for Charles the First, had been rewarded after the Restoration with high honours and commands, and had quitted them when the Test Act was passed. With these distinguished leaders all the noblest and most opulent members of their church concurred, except Lord Arundell of Wardour, an old man fast sinking into second childhood.

Cabal of violent Roman Catholics.

But there was at the court a small knot of Roman Catholics whose hearts had been ulcerated by old injuries, whose heads had been turned by recent elevation, who were impatient to climb to the highest honours of the state, and who, having little to lose, were not troubled by thoughts of the day of reckoning. One of these was Roger Palmer, Earl of Castelmaine in Ireland, and husband of the Duchess of Cleveland. His title had notoriously been purchased by his wife's dishonour and his own. His fortune was small. His temper, naturally ungentle, had been exasperated by his domestic vexations, by the public reproaches, and by what he had undergone in the days of the Popish plot. He had been long a prisoner, and had at length been tried for his life. Happily for him, he was not put to the bar till the first burst of popular rage had spent itself, and till the credit of the false witnesses had been blown upon. He had therefore escaped, though very narrowly.*

Castelmaine.

Jermyn.

With Castelmaine was allied one of the most favoured of his wife's hundred lovers, Henry Jermyn, whom James had lately created a peer by the title of Lord Dover. Jermyn had been distinguished more than twenty years before by his vagrant amours and his desperate duels. He was now ruined by play, and was eager to retrieve his fallen fortunes by means of lucrative

* See his trial in the Collection of State Trials, and his curious manifesto, printed in 1681.

Digitized by Google

posts from which the laws excluded him.* To the same party belonged an intriguing pushing Irishman named White, who had been much abroad, who had served the House of Austria as something between an envoy and a spy, and who had been rewarded by that House for his services with the title of Marquess of Albeville.†

White.

Soon after the prorogation this reckless faction was strengthened by an important reinforcement. Richard Talbot, Earl of Tyrconnel, the fiercest and most uncompromising of all those who hated the liberties and religion of England, arrived at court from Dublin.

Tyrconnel.

Talbot was descended from an old Norman family which had been long settled in Leinster, which had there sunk into degeneracy, which had adopted the manners of the Celts, which had, like the Celts, adhered to the old religion, and which had taken part with the Celts in the rebellion of 1641. In his youth he had been one of the most noted sharpers and bullies of London. He had been introduced to Charles and James when they were exiles in Flanders, as a man fit and ready for the infamous service of assassinating the Protector. Soon after the Restoration, Talbot attempted to obtain the favour of the royal family by a service more infamous still. A plea was wanted which might justify the Duke of York in breaking that promise of marriage by which he had obtained from Anne Hyde the last proof of female affection. Such a plea Talbot, in concert with some of his dissolute companions, undertook to furnish. They agreed to describe the poor young lady as a creature without virtue, shame, or delicacy, and made up long romances about tender interviews

* Mémoires de Grammont; Pepys's Diary, Aug. 19. 1662.; Bonrepaux to Seignelay, Feb. $\frac{1}{11}$. 1686.

† Bonrepaux to Seignelay Feb. $\frac{1}{11}$. 1686.

Digitized by Google

and stolen favours. Talbot in particular related how, in one of his secret visits to her, he had unluckily overturned the Chancellor's inkstand upon a pile of papers, and how cleverly she had averted a discovery by laying the blame of the accident on her monkey. These stories, which, if they had been true, would never have passed the lips of any but the basest of mankind, were pure inventions. Talbot was soon forced to own that they were so; and he owned it without a blush. The injured lady became Duchess of York. Had her husband been a man really upright and honourable, he would have driven from his presence with indignation and contempt the wretches who had slandered her. But one of the peculiarities of James's character was that no act, however wicked and shameful, which had been prompted by a desire to gain his favour, ever seemed to him deserving of disapprobation. Talbot continued to frequent the court, appeared daily with brazen front before the princess whose ruin he had plotted, and was installed into the lucrative post of chief pandar to her husband. In no long time Whitehall was thrown into confusion by the news that Dick Talbot, as he was commonly called, had laid a plan to murder the Duke of Ormond. The bravo was sent to the Tower: but in a few days he was again swaggering about the galleries, and carrying billets backward and forward between his patron and the ugliest maids of honour. It was in vain that old and discreet counsellors implored the royal brothers not to countenance this bad man, who had nothing to recommend him except his fine person and his taste in dress. Talbot was not only welcome at the palace when the bottle or the dicebox was going round, but was heard with attention on matters of business. He affected the character of an Irish patriot, and pleaded, with great audacity, and sometimes with success, the cause of his countrymen whose estates had been confiscated. He took care,

Digitized by Google

however, to be well paid for his services, and succeeded in acquiring, partly by the sale of his influence, partly by gambling, and partly by pimping, an estate of three thousand pounds a year. For under an outward show of levity, profusion, improvidence, and eccentric impudence, he was in truth one of the most mercenary and crafty of mankind. He was now no longer young, and was expiating by severe sufferings the dissoluteness of his youth: but age and disease had made no essential change in his character and manners. He still, whenever he opened his mouth, ranted, cursed, and swore with such frantic violence that superficial observers set him down for the wildest of libertines. The multitude was unable to conceive that a man who, even when sober, was more furious and boastful than others when they were drunk, and who seemed utterly incapable of disguising any emotion or keeping any secret, could really be a coldhearted, farsighted, scheming sycophant. Yet such a man was Talbot. In truth his hypocrisy was of a far higher and rarer sort than the hypocrisy which had flourished in Barebone's Parliament. For the consummate hypocrite is not he who conceals vice behind the semblance of virtue, but he who makes the vice which he has no objection to show a stalking horse to cover darker and more profitable vice which it is for his interest to hide.

Talbot, raised by James to the earldom of Tyrconnel, had commanded the troops in Ireland during the nine months which elapsed between the termination of the viceroyalty of Ormond and the commencement of the viceroyalty of Clarendon. When the new Lord Lieutenant was about to leave London for Dublin, the General was summoned from Dublin to London. Dick Talbot had long been well known on the road which he had now to travel. Between Chester and the capital there was not an inn where

Digitized by Google

he had not been in a brawl. He was now more insolent and turbulent than ever. He pressed horses in defiance of law, swore at the cooks and postilions, and almost raised mobs by his insolent rodomontades. The Reformation, he told the people, had ruined everything. But fine times were coming. The Catholics would soon be uppermost. The heretics should pay for all. Raving and blaspheming incessantly, like a demoniac, he came to the Court.* As soon as he was there, he allied himself closely with Castelmaine, Dover, and Albeville. These men called with one voice for war on the constitution of the Church and the State. They told their master that he owed it to his religion and to the dignity of his crown to stand firm against the outcry of heretical demagogues, and exhorted him to let the Parliament see from the first that he would be master in spite of opposition, and that the only effect of opposition would be to make him a hard master.

Feeling of the ministers of foreign governments.

Each of the two parties into which the Court was divided had zealous foreign allies. The ministers of Spain, of the Empire, and of the States General were now as anxious to support Rochester as they had formerly been to support Halifax. All the influence of Barillon was employed on the other side; and Barillon was assisted by another French agent, inferior to him in station, but superior in abilities, Bonrepaux. Barillon was not without parts, and possessed in large measure the graces and accomplishments which then distinguished the French gentry. But his capacity was scarcely equal to what his great place required. He had become sluggish and selfindulgent, liked the pleasures of society and of the table better than

* Mémoires de Grammont; Life of Edward, Earl of Clarendon; Correspondence of Henry, Earl of Clarendon, *passim*, particularly the letter dated Dec. 29. 1685; Sheridan MS. among the Stuart Papers; Ellis Correspondence, Jan. 2. 1686.

Digitized by Google

business, and on great emergencies generally waited for admonitions and even for reprimands from Versailles before he showed much activity.* Bonrepaux had raised himself from obscurity by the intelligence and industry which he had exhibited as a clerk in the department of the marine, and was esteemed an adept in the mystery of mercantile politics. At the close of the year 1685, he was sent to London charged with several special commissions of high importance. He was to lay the ground for a treaty of commerce; he was to ascertain and report the state of the English fleets and dockyards; and he was to make some overtures to the Huguenot refugees, who, it was supposed, had been so effectually tamed by penury and exile, that they would thankfully accept almost any terms of reconciliation. The new Envoy's origin was plebeian: his stature was dwarfish: his countenance was ludicrously ugly; and his accent was that of his native Gascony: but his strong sense, his keen penetration, and his lively wit eminently qualified him for his post. In spite of every disadvantage of birth and figure, he was soon known as a pleasing companion and as a skilful diplomatist. He contrived, while flirting with the Duchess of Mazarin, discussing literary questions with Waller and Saint Evremond, and corresponding with La Fontaine, to acquire a considerable knowledge of English politics. His skill in maritime affairs recommended him to James, who had, during many years, paid close attention to the business of the Admiralty, and understood that business as well as he was capable of understanding anything. They conversed every day long and freely about the state of the shipping and the dockyards. The result of

* See his later correspondence, *passim*; Saint Evremond, *passim*; and Madame de Sévigné's Letters in the beginning of 1689. See also the instructions to Tallard after the peace of Ryswick, in the French archives.

Digitized by Google

this intimacy was, as might have been expected, that the keen and vigilant Frenchman conceived a great contempt for the King's abilities and character. The world, he said, had much overrated His Britannic Majesty, who had less capacity than Charles, and not more virtue.*

The two envoys of Lewis, though pursuing one object, very judiciously took different paths. They made a partition of the court. Bonrepaux lived chiefly with Rochester and Rochester's adherents. Barillon's connections were chiefly with the opposite faction. The consequence was that they sometimes saw the same event in different points of view. The best account now extant of the contest which at this time agitated Whitehall is to be found in their despatches.

The Pope and the Order of Jesus opposed to each other.

As each of the two parties at the court of James had the support of foreign princes, so each had also the support of an ecclesiastical authority to which the King paid great deference. The Supreme Pontiff was for legal and moderate courses; and his sentiments were expressed by the Nuncio and by the Vicar Apostolic.† On the other side was a body of which the weight balanced even the weight of the Papacy, the mighty Order of Jesus.

That at this conjuncture these two great spiritual powers, once, as it seemed, inseparably allied, should have been opposed to each other, is a most important and remarkable circumstance. During a period of

* Saint Simon, Mémoires, 1697, 1719; Saint Evremond; La Fontaine; Bonrepaux to Seignelay, $\frac{\text{Jan. 28.}}{\text{Feb. 7.}}$, Feb. $\frac{8}{18}$. 1686.

† Adda, Nov. $\frac{18}{28}$., Dec. $\frac{2}{12}$., and Dec. $\frac{2}{12}$. 1685. In these despatches Adda gives strong reasons for compromising matters by abolishing the penal laws and leaving the test. He calls the quarrel with the Parliament a "gran disgrazia." He repeatedly hints that the King might, by a constitutional policy, have obtained much for the Roman Catholics, and that the attempt to relieve them illegally is likely to bring great calamities on them.

Digitized by Google

little less than a thousand years the regular clergy had been the chief support of the Holy See. By that See they had been protected from episcopal interference; and the protection which they had received had been amply repaid. But for their exertions it is probable that the Bishop of Rome would have been merely the honorary president of a vast aristocracy of prelates. It was by the aid of the Benedictines that Gregory the Seventh was enabled to contend at once against the Franconian Cæsars and against the secular priesthood. It was by the aid of the Dominicans and Franciscans that Innocent the Third crushed the Albigensian sectaries. Three centuries later the Pontificate, exposed to new dangers more formidable than had ever before threatened it, was saved by a new religious order, which was animated by intense enthusiasm and organised with exquisite skill. When the Jesuits came to the rescue, they found the Papacy in extreme peril: but from that moment the tide of battle turned. Protestantism, which had, during a whole generation, carried all before it, was stopped in its progress, and rapidly beaten back from the foot of the Alps to the shores of the Baltic. Before the Order had existed a hundred years, it had filled the whole world with memorials of great things done and suffered for the faith. No religious community could produce a list of men so variously distinguished: none had extended its operations over so vast a space: yet in none had there ever been such perfect unity of feeling and action. There was no region of the globe, no walk of speculative or of active life, in which Jesuits were not to be found. They guided the counsels of Kings. They deciphered Latin inscriptions. They observed the motions of Jupiter's satellites. They published whole libraries, controversy, casuistry, history, treatises on optics, Alcaic odes, editions of the fathers, madrigals, catechisms, and lampoons. The liberal education of

The Order of Jesus.

Digitized by Google

youth passed almost entirely into their hands, and was conducted by them with conspicuous ability. They appear to have discovered the precise point to which intellectual culture can be carried without risk of intellectual emancipation. Enmity itself was compelled to own that, in the art of managing and forming the tender mind, they had no equals. Meanwhile they assiduously and successfully cultivated the eloquence of the pulpit. With still greater assiduity and still greater success they applied themselves to the ministry of the confessional. Throughout Roman Catholic Europe the secrets of every government and of almost every family of note were in their keeping. They glided from one Protestant country to another under innumerable disguises, as gay Cavaliers, as simple rustics, as Puritan preachers. They wandered to countries which neither mercantile avidity nor liberal curiosity had ever impelled any stranger to explore. They were to be found in the garb of Mandarins, superintending the observatory at Pekin. They were to be found, spade in hand, teaching the rudiments of agriculture to the savages of Paraguay. Yet, whatever might be their residence, whatever might be their employment, their spirit was the same, entire devotion to the common cause, unreasoning obedience to the central authority. None of them had chosen his dwellingplace or his vocation for himself. Whether the Jesuit should live under the arctic circle or under the equator, whether he should pass his life in arranging gems and collating manuscripts at the Vatican or in persuading naked barbarians under the Southern Cross not to eat each other, were matters which he left with profound submission to the decision of others. If he was wanted at Lima, he was on the Atlantic in the next fleet. If he was wanted at Bagdad, he was toiling through the desert with the next caravan. If his ministry was needed in some country where his life was more insecure

Digitized by Google

than that of a wolf, where it was a crime to harbour him, where the heads and quarters of his brethren, fixed in the public places, showed him what he had to expect, he went without remonstrance or hesitation to his doom. Nor is this heroic spirit yet extinct. When, in our own time, a new and terrible pestilence passed round the globe, when, in some great cities, fear had dissolved all the ties which hold society together, when the secular clergy had forsaken their flocks, when medical succour was not to be purchased by gold, when the strongest natural affections had yielded to the love of life, even then the Jesuit was found by the pallet which bishop and curate, physician and nurse, father and mother, had deserted, bending over infected lips to catch the faint accents of confession, and holding up to the last, before the expiring penitent, the image of the expiring Redeemer.

But with the admirable energy, disinterestedness, and selfdevotion which were characteristic of the Society, great vices were mingled. It was alleged, and not without foundation, that the ardent public spirit which made the Jesuit regardless of his ease, of his liberty, and of his life, made him also regardless of truth and of mercy; that no means which could promote the interest of his religion seemed to him unlawful, and that by the interest of his religion he too often meant the interest of his Society. It was alleged that, in the most atrocious plots recorded in history, his agency could be distinctly traced; that, constant only in attachment to the fraternity to which he belonged, he was in some countries the most dangerous enemy of freedom, and in others the most dangerous enemy of order. The mighty victories which he boasted that he had achieved in the cause of the Church were, in the judgment of many illustrious members of that Church, rather apparent than real. He had indeed laboured with a wonderful show of success to reduce the world under her laws; but he

Digitized by Google

had done so by relaxing her laws to suit the temper of the world. Instead of toiling to elevate human nature to the noble standard fixed by divine precept and example, he had lowered the standard till it was beneath the average level of human nature. He gloried in multitudes of converts who had been baptised in the remote regions of the East: but it was reported that from some of those converts the facts on which the whole theology of the Gospel depends had been cunningly concealed, and that others were permitted to avoid persecution by bowing down before the images of false gods, while internally repeating Paters and Aves. Nor was it only in heathen countries that such arts were said to be practised. It was not strange that people of all ranks, and especially of the highest ranks, crowded to the confessionals in the Jesuit temples; for from those confessionals none went discontented away. There the priest was all things to all men. He showed just so much rigour as might not drive those who knelt at his spiritual tribunal to the Dominican or the Franciscan church. If he had to deal with a mind truly devout, he spoke in the saintly tones of the primitive fathers: but with that large part of mankind who have religion enough to make them uneasy when they do wrong, and not religion enough to keep them from doing wrong, he followed a different system. Since he could not reclaim them from vice, it was his business to save them from remorse. He had at his command an immense dispensary of anodynes for wounded consciences. In the books of casuistry which had been written by his brethren, and printed with the approbation of his superiors, were to be found doctrines consolatory to transgressors of every class. There the bankrupt was taught how he might, without sin, secrete his goods from his creditors. The servant was taught how he might, without sin, run off with his master's plate. The pandar

Digitized by Google

was assured that a Christian man might innocently earn his living by carrying letters and messages between married women and their gallants. The high spirited and punctilious gentlemen of France were gratified by a decision in favour of duelling. The Italians, accustomed to darker and baser modes of vengeance, were glad to learn that they might, without any crime, shoot at their enemies from behind hedges. To deceit was given a license sufficient to destroy the whole value of human contracts and of human testimony. In truth, if society continued to hold together, if life and property enjoyed any security, it was because common sense and common humanity restrained men from doing what the Order of Jesus assured them that they might with a safe conscience do.

So strangely were good and evil intermixed in the character of these celebrated brethren; and the intermixture was the secret of their gigantic power. That power could never have belonged to mere hypocrites. It could never have belonged to rigid moralists. It was to be attained only by men sincerely enthusiastic in the pursuit of a great end, and at the same time unscrupulous as to the choice of means.

From the first the Jesuits had been bound by a peculiar allegiance to the Pope. Their mission had been not less to quell all mutiny within the Church than to repel the hostility of her avowed enemies. Their doctrine was in the highest degree what has been called on our side of the Alps Ultramontane, and differed almost as much from the doctrine of Bossuet as from that of Luther. They condemned the Gallican liberties, the claim of œcumenical councils to control the Holy See, and the claim of Bishops to an independent commission from heaven. Lainez, in the name of the whole fraternity, proclaimed at Trent, amidst the applause of the creatures of Pius the Fourth, and the murmurs of French and Spanish

Digitized by Google

prelates, that the government of the faithful had been committed by Christ to the Pope alone, that in the Pope alone all sacerdotal authority was concentrated, and that through the Pope alone priests and bishops derived whatever power they possessed.* During many years the union between the Supreme Pontiffs and the Order had continued unbroken. Had that union been still unbroken when James the Second ascended the English throne, had the influence of the Jesuits as well as the influence of the Pope been exerted in favour of a moderate and constitutional policy, it is probable that the great revolution which in a short time changed the whole state of European affairs would never have taken place. But, even before the middle of the seventeenth century, the Society, proud of its services and confident in its strength, had become impatient of the yoke. A generation of Jesuits sprang up, who looked for protection and guidance rather to the court of France than to the court of Rome; and this disposition was not a little strengthened when Innocent the Eleventh was raised to the papal throne.

The Jesuits were, at that time, engaged in a war to the death against an enemy whom they had at first disdained, but whom they had at length been forced to regard with respect and fear. Just when their prosperity was at the height, they were braved by a handful of opponents, who had indeed no influence with the rulers of this world, but who were strong in religious faith and intellectual energy. Then followed a long, a strange, a glorious conflict of genius against power. The Jesuit called cabinets, tribunals, universities to his aid; and they responded to the call. Port Royal appealed, not in vain, to the hearts and to the understandings of millions. The dictators of Christendom found themselves, on a sudden, in the

* Fra Paolo, lib. vii.; Pallavicino, lib. xviii. cap. 15.

Digitized by Google

position of culprits. They were arraigned on the charge of having systematically debased the standard of evangelical morality, for the purpose of increasing their own influence; and the charge was enforced in a manner which at once arrested the attention of the whole world: for the chief accuser was Blaise Pascal. His powers of mind were such as have rarely been bestowed on any of the children of men; and the vehemence of the zeal which animated him was but too well proved by the cruel penances and vigils under which his macerated frame sank into an early grave. His spirit was the spirit of Saint Bernard: but the delicacy of his wit, the purity, the energy, the simplicity of his rhetoric, had never been equalled, except by the great masters of Attic eloquence. All Europe read and admired, laughed and wept. The Jesuits attempted to reply: but their feeble answers were received by the public with shouts of mockery. They wanted, it is true, no talent or accomplishment into which men can be drilled by elaborate discipline; but such discipline, though it may bring out the powers of ordinary minds, has a tendency to suffocate, rather than to develope, original genius. It was universally acknowledged that, in the literary contest, the Jansenists were completely victorious. To the Jesuits nothing was left but to oppress the sect which they could not confute. Lewis the Fourteenth was now their chief support. His conscience had, from boyhood, been in their keeping; and he had learned from them to abhor Jansenism quite as much as he abhorred Protestantism, and very much more than he abhorred Atheism. Innocent the Eleventh, on the other hand, leaned to the Jansenist opinions. The consequence was that the Society found itself in a situation never contemplated by its founder. The Jesuits were estranged from the Supreme Pontiff; and they were closely allied with a prince who proclaimed himself the

Digitized by Google

champion of the Gallican liberties and the enemy of Ultramontane pretensions. The Order therefore became in England an instrument of the designs of Lewis, and laboured, with a success which the Roman Catholics afterwards long and bitterly deplored, to widen the breach between the King and the Parliament, to thwart the Nuncio, to undermine the power of the Lord Treasurer, and to support the most desperate schemes of Tyrconnel.

Thus on one side were the Hydes and the whole body of Tory churchmen, Powis and all the most respectable noblemen and gentlemen of the King's own faith, the States General, the House of Austria, and the Pope. On the other side were a few Roman Catholic adventurers, of broken fortune and tainted reputation, backed by France and by the Jesuits.

Father Petre.

The chief representative of the Jesuits at Whitehall was an English brother of the Order, who had, during some time, acted as Viceprovincial, who had been long regarded by James with peculiar favour, and who had lately been made Clerk of the Closet. This man, named Edward Petre, was descended from an honourable family: his manners were courtly: his speech was flowing and plausible: but he was weak and vain, covetous and ambitious. Of all the evil counsellors who had access to the royal ear, he bore, perhaps, the largest part in the ruin of the House of Stuart.

The King's temper and opinions.

The obstinate and imperious nature of the King gave great advantages to those who advised him to be firm, to yield nothing, and to make himself feared. One state maxim had taken possession of his small understanding, and was not to be dislodged by reason. To reason, indeed, he was not in the habit of attending. His mode of arguing, if it is to be so called, was one not uncommon among dull and stubborn persons, who are accustomed to be surrounded by their inferiors. He asserted a propo-

Digitized by Google

sition; and, as often as wiser people ventured respectfully to show that it was erroneous, he asserted it again, in exactly the same words, and conceived that, by doing so, he at once disposed of all objections.* "I will make no concession," he often repeated; "my father made concessions, and he was beheaded." † Even if it had been true that concession had been fatal to Charles the First, a man of sense would have remembered that a single experiment is not sufficient to establish a general rule even in sciences much less complicated than the science of government; that, since the beginning of the world, no two political experiments were ever made of which all the conditions were exactly alike; and that the only way to learn civil prudence from history is to examine and compare an immense number of cases. But, if the single instance on which the King relied proved anything, it proved that he was in the wrong. There can be little doubt that, if Charles had frankly made to the Short Parliament, which met in the spring of 1640, but one half of the concessions which he made, a few months later, to the Long Parliament, he would have lived and died a powerful King. On the other hand, there can be no doubt whatever that, if he had refused to make any concession to the Long Parliament, and had resorted to arms in defence of the Ship-money and of the Star Chamber, he would have seen, in the hostile ranks, Hyde and Falkland side by side with Hollis and Hampden. It would indeed be more correct to say that, if he had refused to make any concession, he would not have been able to resort to arms; for not twenty Cavaliers would have joined his

* This was the practice of his daughter Anne; and Marlborough said that she had learned it from her father. See the Vindication of the Duchess of Marlborough.

† Down to the time of the trial of the Bishops, James went on telling Adda that all the calamities of Charles the First were "per la troppa indulgenza." Despatch of $\frac{\text{June 29.}}{\text{July 9.}}$ 1688.

Digitized by Google

standard. It was to his large concessions alone that he owed the support of that great body of noblemen and gentlemen who fought so long and so gallantly in his cause. But it would have been useless to represent these things to James.

Another fatal delusion had taken possession of his mind, and was never dispelled till it had ruined him. He firmly believed that, do what he might, the members of the Church of England would act up to their principles. It had, he knew, been proclaimed from ten thousand pulpits, it had been solemnly declared by the University of Oxford, that even tyranny as frightful as that of the most depraved of the Cæsars did not justify subjects in resisting the royal authority; and hence he was weak enough to conclude that the whole body of Tory gentlemen and clergymen would let him plunder, oppress, and insult them, without lifting an arm against him. It seems strange that any man should have passed his fiftieth year without discovering that people sometimes do what they think wrong: and James had only to look into his own heart for abundant proof that even a strong sense of religious duty will not always prevent frail human beings from indulging their passions in defiance of divine laws, and at the risk of awful penalties. He must have been conscious that, though he thought adultery sinful, he was an adulterer: but nothing could convince him that any man who professed to think rebellion sinful would ever, in any extremity, be a rebel. The Church of England was, in his view, a passive victim, which he might, without danger, outrage and torture at his pleasure; nor did he ever see his error till the Universities were preparing to coin their plate for the purpose of supplying the military chest of his enemies, and till a Bishop, long renowned for loyalty, had thrown aside the cassock, put on jackboots, and taken the command of a regiment of insurgents.

Digitized by Google

The King encouraged in his errors by Sunderland.

In these fatal follies the King was artfully encouraged by a minister who had been an Exclusionist, and who still called himself a Protestant, the Earl of Sunderland. The motives and conduct of this unprincipled politician have often been misrepresented. He was, in his own lifetime, accused by the Jacobites of having, even before the beginning of the reign of James, determined to bring about a revolution in favour of the Prince of Orange, and of having, with that view, recommended a succession of outrages on the civil and ecclesiastical constitution of the realm. This idle story has been repeated down to our own days by ignorant writers. But no well informed historian, whatever might be his prejudices, has condescended to adopt it: for it rests on no evidence whatever; and scarcely any evidence would convince reasonable men that Sunderland deliberately incurred guilt and infamy in order to bring about a change by which it was clear that he could not possibly be a gainer, and by which, in fact, he lost immense wealth and influence. Nor is there the smallest reason for resorting to so strange a hypothesis. For the truth lies on the surface. Crooked as this man's course was, the law which determined it was simple. His conduct is to be ascribed to the alternate influence of cupidity and fear on a mind highly susceptible of both those passions, and quicksighted rather than farsighted. He wanted more power and more money. More power he could obtain only at Rochester's expense; and the obvious way to obtain power at Rochester's expense was to encourage the dislike which the King felt for Rochester's moderate counsels. Money could be most easily and most largely obtained from the court of Versailles; and Sunderland was eager to sell himself to that court. He had no jovial generous vices. He cared little for wine or for beauty: but he desired riches with an ungovernable

Digitized by Google

and insatiable desire. The passion for play raged in him without measure, and had not been tamed by ruinous losses. His hereditary fortune was ample. He had long filled lucrative posts, and had neglected no art which could make them more lucrative: but his ill luck at the hazard table was such that his estates were daily becoming more and more encumbered. In the hope of extricating himself from his embarrassments, he betrayed to Barillon all the schemes adverse to France which had been meditated in the English cabinet, and hinted that a Secretary of State could in such times render services for which it might be wise in Lewis to pay largely. The Ambassador told his master that six thousand guineas was the smallest gratification that could be offered to so important a minister. Lewis consented to go as high as twenty five thousand crowns, equivalent to about five thousand six hundred pounds sterling. It was agreed that Sunderland should receive this sum yearly, and that he should, in return, exert all his influence to prevent the reassembling of the Parliament.*

He joined himself therefore to the Jesuitical cabal, and made so dexterous an use of the influence of that cabal that he was appointed to succeed Halifax in the high dignity of Lord President without being required to resign the far more active and lucrative post of Secretary.† He felt, however, that he could never hope to obtain paramount influence in the Court while he was supposed to belong to the Established Church. All religions were the same to him.

* Barillon, Nov. $\frac{16}{26}$. 1685; Lewis to Barillon, $\frac{\text{Nov. } 26.}{\text{Dec. } 6.}$. In a highly curious paper which was written in 1687, almost certainly by Bonrepaux, and which is now in the French archives, Sunderland is described thus: — "La passion qu'il a pour le jeu, et les pertes considerables qu'il y fait, incommodent fort ses affaires. Il n'aime pas le vin; et il haït les femmes."

† It appears from the Council Book that he took his place as President on the 4th of December, 1685.

Digitized by Google

In private circles, indeed, he was in the habit of talking with profane contempt of the most sacred things. He therefore determined to let the King have the delight and glory of effecting a conversion. Some management, however, was necessary. No man is utterly without regard for the opinion of his fellow creatures: and even Sunderland, though not very sensible to shame, flinched from the infamy of public apostasy. He played his part with rare adroitness. To the world he showed himself as a Protestant. In the Royal Closet he assumed the character of an earnest enquirer after truth, who was almost persuaded to declare himself a Roman Catholic, and who, while waiting for fuller illumination, was disposed to render every service in his power to the professors of the old faith. James, who was never very discerning, and who in religious matters was absolutely blind, suffered himself, notwithstanding all that he had seen of human knavery, of the knavery of courtiers as a class, and of the knavery of Sunderland in particular, to be duped into the belief that divine grace had touched the most false and callous of human hearts. During many months the wily minister continued to be regarded at court as a promising catechumen, without exhibiting himself to the public in the character of a renegade.*

He early suggested to the King the expediency of appointing a secret committee of Roman Catholics to advise on all matters affecting the interests of their religion. This committee met sometimes at Chiffinch's lodgings, and sometimes at the official apartments of Sunderland, who, though still nominally a Protestant, was admitted to all its deliberations, and

* Bonrepaux was not so easily deceived as James. "En son particulier il (Sunderland) n'en professe aucune (religion), et en parle fort librement. Ces sortes de discours seroient en exécration en France. Ici ils sont ordinaires parmi un certain nombre de gens du pais."— Bonrepaux to Seignelay, $\frac{\text{May 21.}}{\text{June 1.}}$ 1687.

Digitized by Google

soon obtained a decided ascendency over the other members. Every Friday the Jesuitical cabal dined with the Secretary. The conversation at table was free; and the weaknesses of the prince whom the confederates hoped to manage were not spared. To Petre Sunderland promised a Cardinal's hat; to Castelmaine a splendid embassy to Rome; to Dover a lucrative command in the Guards; and to Tyrconnel high employment in Ireland. Thus bound together by the strongest ties of interest, these men addressed themselves to the task of subverting the Treasurer's power.*

There were two Protestant members of the cabinet who took no decided part in the struggle. Jeffreys was at this time tortured by a cruel internal malady which had been aggravated by intemperance. At a dinner which a wealthy Alderman gave to some of the leading members of the government, the Lord Treasurer and the Lord Chancellor were so drunk that they stripped themselves almost stark naked, and were with difficulty prevented from climbing up a signpost to drink His Majesty's health. The pious Treasurer escaped with nothing but the scandal of the debauch: but the Chancellor brought on a violent fit of his complaint. His life was for some time thought to be in serious danger. James expressed great uneasiness at the thought of losing a minister who suited him so well, and said, with some truth, that the loss of such a man could not be easily repaired. Jeffreys, when he became convalescent, promised his support to both the contending parties, and waited to see which of them would prove victorious. Some curious proofs of his duplicity are still extant. It has been already said that the two French agents who were then resident in London had divided the English court

Perfidy of Jeffreys.

* Life of James the Second, ii. 74. 77. Orig. Mem.; Sheridan MS.; Barillon, March $\frac{18}{28}$. 1686.

Digitized by Google

between them Bonrepaux was constantly with Rochester; and Barillon lived with Sunderland. Lewis was informed in the same week by Bonrepaux that the Chancellor was entirely with the Treasurer, and by Barillon that the Chancellor was in league with the Secretary.*

Godolphin. Godolphin, cautious and taciturn, did his best to preserve neutrality. His opinions and wishes were undoubtedly with Rochester: but his office made it necessary for him to be in constant attendance on the Queen; and he was naturally unwilling to be on bad terms with her. There is indeed some reason to believe that he regarded her with an attachment more romantic than often finds place in the hearts of veteran statesmen; and circumstances, which it is now necessary to relate, had thrown her entirely into the hands of the Jesuitical cabal.†

The Queen.

Amours of the King. The King, stern as was his temper and grave as was his deportment, was scarcely less under the influence of female attractions than his more lively and amiable brother had been. The beauty, indeed, which distinguished the favourite ladies of Charles was not necessary to James. Barbara Palmer, Eleanor Gwynn, and Louisa de Querouaille were among the finest women of their time. James, when young, had surrendered his liberty, descended below his rank, and incurred the displeasure of his family, for the coarse features of Anne Hyde. He had soon, to the great diversion of the whole court, been drawn away from his plain consort by a plainer mistress, Arabella Churchill. His second wife, though twenty years younger than himself, and

* Reresby's Memoirs; Luttrell's Diary, Feb. 2. 168⅔; Barillon, Feb. 4/14., Jan. 26/Feb. 7.; Bonrepaux, Jan. 25/Feb. 4.

† Dartmouth's note on Burnet, i. 621. In a contemporary satire it is remarked that Godolphin

"Beats time with politic head, and all approves,
Pleased with the charge of the Queen's muff and gloves."

Digitized by Google

of no unpleasing face or figure, had frequent reason to complain of his inconstancy. But of all his illicit attachments the strongest was that which bound him to Catharine Sedley.

Catharine Sedley.

This woman was the daughter of Sir Charles Sedley, one of the most brilliant and profligate wits of the Restoration. The licentiousness of his writings is not redeemed by much grace or vivacity; but the charms of his conversation were acknowledged even by sober men who had no esteem for his character. To sit near him at the theatre, and to hear his criticisms on a new play, was regarded as an intellectual treat.* Dryden had done him the honour to make him a principal interlocutor in the Dialogue on Dramatic Poesy. The morals of Sedley were such as, even in that age, gave great scandal. He on one occasion, after a wild revel, exhibited himself without a shred of clothing in the balcony of a tavern near Covent Garden, and harangued the people who were passing in language so indecent and profane that he was driven in by a shower of brickbats, was prosecuted for a misdemeanour, was sentenced to a heavy fine, and was reprimanded by the Court of King's Bench in the most cutting terms.† His daughter had inherited his abilities and his impudence. Personal charms she had none, with the exception of two brilliant eyes, the lustre of which, to men of delicate taste, seemed fierce and unfeminine. Her form was lean, her countenance haggard. Charles, though he liked her conversation, laughed at her ugliness, and said that the priests must have recommended her to his brother by way of penance. She well knew that she was not handsome, and jested freely on her own homeliness. Yet, with strange inconsistency, she loved to adorn herself magnificently, and drew on herself much keen ridicule by appearing in the theatre and

* Pepys, Oct. 4. 1664. † Pepys, July 1. 1663.

Digitized by Google

the ring plastered, painted, clad in Brussels lace, glittering with diamonds, and affecting all the graces of eighteen.*

The nature of her influence over James is not easily to be explained. He was no longer young. He was a religious man: at least he was willing to make for his religion exertions and sacrifices from which the great majority of those who are called religious men would shrink. It seems strange that any attraction should have drawn him into a course of life which he must have regarded as highly criminal; and in this case none could understand where the attraction lay. Catharine herself was astonished by the violence of his passion. "It cannot be my beauty," she said; "for he must see that I have none: and it cannot be my wit; for he has not enough to know that I have any."

At the moment of the King's accession, a sense of the new responsibility which lay on him made his mind for a time peculiarly open to religious impressions. He formed and announced many good resolutions, spoke in public with great severity of the impious and licentious manners of the age, and in private assured his Queen and his confessor that he would see Catharine Sedley no more. He wrote to his mistress entreating her to quit the apartments which she occupied at Whitehall, and to go to a house in Saint James's Square which had been splendidly furnished for her at his expense. He at the same time promised to allow her a large pension from his privy purse. Catharine, clever, strongminded, intrepid, and conscious of her power, refused to stir. In a few months it began to be whispered that the services of Chiffinch were again employed, and that the mistress frequently passed and repassed through that private door through which Father Huddleston

* See Dorset's satirical lines on her.

Digitized by Google

had borne the host to the bedside of Charles. The King's Protestant ministers had, it seems, conceived a hope that their master's infatuation for this woman might cure him of the more pernicious infatuation which impelled him to attack their religion. She had all the talents which could qualify her to play on his feelings, to make game of his scruples, to set before him in a strong light the difficulties and dangers into which he was running headlong. Rochester, the champion of the Church, exerted himself to strengthen her influence. Ormond, who is popularly regarded as the personification of all that is pure and highminded in the English Cavalier, encouraged the design. Even Lady Rochester was not ashamed to cooperate, and to cooperate in the very worst way. Her office was to direct the jealousy of the injured wife towards a young lady who was perfectly innocent. The whole court took notice of the coldness and rudeness with which the Queen treated the poor girl on whom suspicion had been thrown: but the cause of Her Majesty's ill humour was a mystery. For a time the intrigue went on prosperously and secretly. Catharine often told the King plainly what the Protestant Lords of the Council only dared to hint in the most delicate phrases. His crown, she said, was at stake: the old dotard Arundell and the blustering Tyrconnel would lead him to his ruin. It is possible that her caresses might have done what the united exhortations of the Lords and the Commons, of the House of Austria and the Holy See, had failed to do, but for a strange mishap which changed the whole face of affairs. James, in a fit of fondness, determined to make his mistress Countess of Dorchester in her own right. Catharine saw all the peril of such a step, and declined the invidious honour. Her lover was obstinate, and himself forced the patent into her hands. She at last accepted it on one condition,

Intrigues of Rochester in favour of Catharine Sedley.

Digitized by Google

which shows her confidence in her own power and in his weakness. She made him give her a solemn promise, not that he would never quit her, but that, if he did so, he would himself announce his resolution to her, and grant her one parting interview.

As soon as the news of her elevation got abroad, the whole palace was in an uproar. The warm blood of Italy boiled in the veins of the Queen. Proud of her youth and of her charms, of her high rank and of her stainless chastity, she could not without agonies of grief and rage see herself deserted and insulted for such a rival. Rochester, perhaps remembering how patiently, after a short struggle, Catharine of Braganza had consented to treat the mistresses of Charles with politeness, had expected that, after a little complaining and pouting, Mary of Modena would be equally submissive. It was not so. She did not even attempt to conceal from the eyes of the world the violence of her emotions. Day after day the courtiers who came to see her dine observed that the dishes were removed untasted from the table. She suffered the tears to stream down her cheeks unconcealed in the presence of the whole circle of ministers and envoys. To the King she spoke with wild vehemence. "Let me go," she cried. "You have made your woman a Countess: make her a Queen. Put my crown on her head. Only let me hide myself in some convent, where I may never see her more." Then, more soberly, she asked him how he reconciled his conduct to his religious professions. "You are ready," she said, "to put your kingdom to hazard for the sake of your soul; and yet you are throwing away your soul for the sake of that creature." Father Petre, on bended knees, seconded these remonstrances. It was his duty to do so; and his duty was not the less strenuously performed because it coincided with his interest. The King went on for a time sinning and repenting. In his hours of re-

Digitized by Google

morse his penances were severe. Mary treasured up to the end of her life, and at her death bequeathed to the convent of Chaillot, the scourge with which he had vigorously avenged her wrongs upon his own shoulders. Nothing but Catharine's absence could put an end to this struggle between an ignoble love and an ignoble superstition. James wrote, imploring and commanding her to depart. He owned that he had promised to bid her farewell in person. "But I know too well," he added, "the power which you have over me. I have not strength of mind enough to keep my resolution if I see you." He offered her a yacht to convey her with all dignity and comfort to Flanders, and threatened that if she did not go quietly she should be sent away by force. She at one time worked on his feelings by pretending to be ill. Then she assumed the airs of a martyr, and impudently proclaimed herself a sufferer for the Protestant religion. Then again she adopted the style of John Hampden. She defied the King to remove her. She would try the right with him. While the Great Charter and the Habeas Corpus Act were the law of the land, she would live where she pleased. "And Flanders!" she cried; "never! I have learned one thing from my friend the Duchess of Mazarin; and that is never to trust myself in a country where there are convents." At length she selected Ireland as the place of her exile, probably because the brother of her patron Rochester was viceroy there. After many delays she departed, leaving the victory to the Queen.*

* The chief materials for the history of this intrigue are the despatches of Barillon and Bonrepaux at the beginning of the year 1686. See Barillon, $\frac{\text{Jan. 25.}}{\text{Feb. 4.}}$, $\frac{\text{Jan. 28.}}{\text{Feb. 7.}}$, Feb. $\frac{1}{11}$., Feb. $\frac{8}{18}$., Feb. $\frac{18}{28}$., and Bonrepaux under the first four dates; Evelyn's Diary, January 19.; Reresby's Memoirs; Burnet, i. 682.; Sheridan MS.; Chaillot MS.; Adda's Despatches, $\frac{\text{Jan. 22.}}{\text{Feb. 1.}}$ and $\frac{\text{Jan. 29.}}{\text{Feb. 8.}}$ 1686. Adda writes like a pious, but weak and ignorant man. He appears to have known nothing of James's past life.

Digitized by Google

The history of this extraordinary intrigue would be imperfect, if it were not added that there is still extant a religious meditation, written by the Treasurer, with his own hand, on the very same day on which the intelligence of his attempt to govern his master by means of a concubine was despatched by Bonrepaux to Versailles. No composition of Ken or Leighton breathes a spirit of more fervent and exalted piety than this effusion. Hypocrisy cannot be suspected: for the paper was evidently meant only for the writer's own eye, and was not published till he had been more than a century in his grave. So much is history stranger than fiction; and so true is it that nature has caprices which art dares not imitate. A dramatist would scarcely venture to bring on the stage a grave prince, in the decline of life, ready to sacrifice his crown in order to serve the interests of his religion, indefatigable in making proselytes, and yet deserting and insulting a virtuous wife who had youth and beauty for the sake of a profligate paramour who had neither. Still less, if possible, would a dramatist venture to introduce a statesman stooping to the wicked and shameful part of a procurer, and calling in his wife to aid him in that dishonourable office, yet, in his moments of leisure, retiring to his closet, and there secretly pouring out his soul to his God in penitent tears and devout ejaculations.*

* The meditation bears date $\frac{\text{Jan. 25.}}{\text{Feb. 4.}}$ 168$\frac{4}{5}$. Bonrepaux, in his despatch of the same day, says, "L'intrigue avoit été conduite par Milord Rochester et sa femme. . . . Leur projet étoit de faire gouverner le Roy d'Angleterre par la nouvelle comtesse. Ils s'étoient assurés d'elle." While Bonrepaux was writing thus, Rochester was writing as follows: "Oh God, teach me so to number my days that I may apply my heart unto wisdom. Teach me to number the days that I have spent in vanity and idleness, and teach me to number those that I have spent in sin and wickedness. Oh God, teach me to number the days of my affliction too, and to give thanks for all that is come to me from thy hand. Teach me

Digitized by Google

The Treasurer soon found that, in using scandalous means for the purpose of obtaining a laudable end, he had committed, not only a crime, but a folly. The Queen was now his enemy. She affected, indeed, to listen with civility while the Hydes excused their recent conduct as well as they could; and she occasionally pretended to use her influence in their favour: but she must have been more or less than woman if she had really forgiven the conspiracy which had been formed against her dignity and her domestic happiness by the family of her husband's first wife. The Jesuits strongly represented to the King the danger which he had so narrowly escaped. His reputation, they said, his peace, his soul, had been put in peril by the machinations of his prime minister. The Nuncio, who would gladly have counteracted the influence of the violent party, and cooperated with the moderate members of the cabinet, could not honestly or decently separate himself on this occasion from Father Petre. James himself, when parted by the sea from the charms which had so strongly fascinated him, could not but regard with resentment and contempt those who had sought to govern him by means of his vices. What had passed must have had the effect of raising his own Church in his esteem, and of lowering the Church of England. The Jesuits, whom it was the fashion to represent as the most unsafe of spiritual guides, as sophists who refined away the whole system of evangelical morality, as sycophants who owed their influence chiefly to the indulgence with which they treated the sins of the great, had reclaimed him from a life of guilt by rebukes as sharp and bold as those which David had heard from Nathan and Herod from the Baptist. On the other hand, zealous Protestants,

Decline of Rochester's influence.

likewise to number the days of this world's greatness of which I have so great a share; and teach me to look upon them as vanity and vexation of spirit."

Digitized by Google

whose favourite theme was the laxity of Popish casuists and the wickedness of doing evil that good might come, had attempted to obtain advantages for their own Church in a way which all Christians regarded as highly criminal. The victory of the cabal of evil counsellors was therefore complete. The King looked coldly on Rochester. The courtiers and foreign ministers soon perceived that the Lord Treasurer was prime minister only in name. He continued to offer his advice daily, and had the mortification to find it daily rejected. Yet he could not prevail on himself to relinquish the outward show of power, and the emoluments which he directly and indirectly derived from his great place. He did his best, therefore, to conceal his vexations from the public eye. But his violent passions and his intemperate habits disqualified him for the part of a dissembler. His gloomy looks, when he came out of the council chamber, showed how little he was pleased with what had passed at the board; and, when the bottle had gone round freely, words escaped him which betrayed his uneasiness.*

He might, indeed, well be uneasy. Indiscreet and unpopular measures followed one another in rapid succession. All thought of returning to the policy of the Triple Alliance was abandoned. The King explicitly avowed to the ministers of those Continental powers with which he had lately intended to ally himself, that all his views had undergone a change, and that England was still to be, as she had been under his grandfather, his father, and his brother, of no account in Europe. "I am in no condition," he said to the Spanish Ambassador, "to trouble myself about what passes abroad. It is my resolution to let foreign affairs take their course, to establish my authority at home, and to do something for my re-

* "Je vis Milord Rochester comme il sortoit du conseil fort chagrin; et, sur la fin du souper, il lui en échappa quelque chose." —Bonrepaux, Feb $\frac{18}{28}$. 1686. See also Barillon, March $\frac{1}{11}$, $\frac{4}{14}$.

Digitized by Google

ligion." A few days later he announced the same intentions to the States General.* From that time to the close of his ignominious reign, he made no serious effort to escape from vassalage, though, to the last, he could never hear, without transports of rage, that men called him a vassal.

The two events which proved to the public that Sunderland and Sunderland's party were victorious were the prorogation of the Parliament from February to May, and the departure of Castelmaine for Rome with the appointments of an Ambassador of the highest rank.†

Hitherto all the business of the English government at the papal court had been transacted by John Caryl. This gentleman was known to his contemporaries as a man of fortune and fashion, and as the author of two successful plays, a tragedy in rhyme which had been made popular by the action and recitation of Betterton, and a comedy which owes all its value to scenes borrowed from Moliere. These pieces have long been forgotten; but what Caryl could not do for himself has been done for him by a more powerful genius. Half a line in the Rape of the Lock has made his name immortal.

Caryl, who was, like all the other respectable Roman Catholics, an enemy to violent courses, had acquitted himself of his delicate errand at Rome with good sense and good feeling. The business confided to him was well done; but he assumed no public character, and carefully avoided all display. His mission, therefore, put the government to scarcely any charge, and excited scarcely any murmurs. His place was now most unwisely supplied by a costly and ostentatious embassy, offensive in the highest degree to the people of England, and

Castelmaine sent to Rome.

* Barillon, $\frac{\text{March 22.}}{\text{April 1.}}$, April $\frac{12}{22}$. 1686.

† London Gazette, Feb. 11. 1685; Luttrell's Diary, Feb. 8.; Van Leeuwen, Feb. $\frac{8}{18}$.; Life of James, ii. 75. Orig. Mem.

Digitized by Google

by no means welcome to the court of Rome. Castelmaine had it in charge to demand a Cardinal's hat for his confederate Petre.

The Huguenots ill treated by James.

About the same time the King began to show, in an unequivocal manner, the feeling which he really entertained towards the banished Huguenots. While he had still hoped to cajole his Parliament into submission, and to become the head of an European coalition against France, he had affected to blame the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and to pity the unhappy men whom persecution had driven from their country. He had caused it to be announced that, at every church in the kingdom, a collection would be made under his sanction for their benefit. A proclamation on this subject had been drawn up in terms which might have wounded the pride of a sovereign less sensitive and vainglorious than Lewis. But all was now changed. The principles of the treaty of Dover were again the principles of the foreign policy of England. Ample apologies were therefore made for the discourtesy with which the English government had acted towards France in showing favour to exiled Frenchmen. The proclamation which had displeased Lewis was recalled.* The Huguenot ministers were admonished to speak with reverence of their oppressor in their public discourses, as they would answer it at their peril. James not only ceased to express commiseration for the sufferers, but declared that he believed them to harbour the worst designs, and owned that he had been guilty of an error in countenancing them. One of the most eminent of the refugees, John Claude, had published on the Continent a small volume in which he described with great force the sufferings of his brethren. Barillon demanded that some opprobrious mark should be put on this book. James

* Van Leeuwen, $\frac{\text{Feb. 25.}}{\text{Mar. 5.}}$ 1686

Digitized by Google

complied, and in full council declared it to be his pleasure that Claude's libel should be burned by the hangman before the Royal Exchange. Even Jeffreys was startled, and ventured to represent that such a proceeding was without example, that the book was written in a foreign tongue, that it had been printed at a foreign press, that it related entirely to transactions which had taken place in a foreign country, and that no English government had ever animadverted on such works. James would not suffer the question to be discussed. "My resolution," he said, "is taken. It has become the fashion to treat Kings disrespectfully; and they must stand by each other. One King should always take another's part; and I have particular reasons for showing this respect to the King of France." There was silence at the board: the order was forthwith issued; and Claude's pamphlet was committed to the flames, not without the deep murmurs of many who had always been reputed steady loyalists.*

The promised collection was long put off under various pretexts. The King would gladly have broken his word: but it was pledged so solemnly that he could not for very shame retract.† Nothing, however, which could cool the zeal of congregations was omitted. It had been expected that, according to the practice usual on such occasions, the people would be exhorted to liberality from the pulpits. But James was determined not to tolerate declamations against his religion and his ally. The Archbishop of Canterbury was therefore commanded to

* Barillon, $\frac{\text{April 26.}}{\text{May 6.}}$, May $\frac{3}{13}$. 1686; Van Citters, May $\frac{7}{17}$; Evelyn's Diary, May 5.; Luttrell's Diary of the same date; Privy Council Book, May 2.

† Lady Russell to Dr. Fitzwilliam, Jan. 22. 1686; Barillon, Feb. $\frac{15}{25}$. $\frac{\text{Feb. 22.}}{\text{Mar. 4.}}$, 1686. "Ce prince témoigne," says Barillon, "une grande aversion pour eux, et aurait bien voulu se dispenser de la collecte, qui est ordonnée en leur faveur: mais il n'a pas cru que cela fût possible."

Digitized by Google

inform the clergy that they must merely read the brief, and must not presume to preach on the sufferings of the French Protestants.* Nevertheless the contributions were so large that, after all deductions, the sum of forty thousand pounds was paid into the Chamber of London. Perhaps none of the munificent subscriptions of our own age has borne so great a proportion to the means of the nation.†

The King was bitterly mortified by the large amount of the collection which had been made in obedience to his own call. He knew, he said, what all this liberality meant. It was mere Whiggish spite to himself and his religion.‡ He had already resolved that the money should be of no use to those whom the donors wished to benefit. He had been, during some weeks, in close communication with the French embassy on this subject, and had, with the approbation of the court of Versailles, determined on a course which it is not very easy to reconcile with those principles of toleration to which he afterwards pretended to be attached. The refugees were zealous for the Calvinistic discipline and worship. James therefore gave orders that none should receive a crust of bread or a basket of coals who did not first take the sacrament according to the Anglican ritual.§ It is strange that this inhospitable rule should have been devised by a prince who affected to consider the Test Act as an outrage on the rights of conscience: for, however unjustifiable it may be to

* Barillon, $\frac{\text{Feb. 22.}}{\text{Mar. 4.}}$ 1686.

† Account of the Commissioners, dated March 15. 1688.

‡ "Le Roi d'Angleterre connoit bien que les gens mal intentionnés pour lui sont les plus prompts et les plus disposés à donner considérablement. . . . . Sa Majesté Britannique connoit bien qu'il auroit été à propos de ne point ordonner de collecte, et que les gens mal intentionnés contre la réligion Catholique et contre lui se servent de cette occasion pour témoigner leur zèle." — Barillon, April $\frac{13}{23}$. 1686.

§ Barillon, Feb. $\frac{15}{25}$., $\frac{\text{Feb. 22.}}{\text{Mar. 4.}}$, April $\frac{13}{23}$. 1686; Lewis to Barillon, Mar. $\frac{4}{14}$.

Digitized by Google

establish a sacramental test for the purpose of ascertaining whether men are fit for civil and military office, it is surely much more unjustifiable to establish a sacramental test for the purpose of ascertaining whether, in their extreme distress, they are fit objects of charity. Nor had James the plea which may be urged in extenuation of the guilt of almost all other persecutors: for the religion which he commanded the refugees to profess, on pain of being left to starve, was not his own religion. His conduct towards them was therefore less excusable than that of Lewis: for Lewis oppressed them in the hope of bringing them over from a damnable heresy to the true Church: James oppressed them only for the purpose of forcing them to apostatise from one damnable heresy to another.

Several Commissioners, of whom the Chancellor was one, had been appointed to dispense the public alms. When they met for the first time, Jeffreys announced the royal pleasure. The refugees, he said, were too generally enemies of monarchy and episcopacy. If they wished for relief, they must become members of the Church of England, and must take the sacrament from the hands of his chaplain. Many exiles, who had come full of gratitude and hope to apply for succour, heard their sentence, and went brokenhearted away.*

The dispensing power.

May was now approaching; and that month had been fixed for the meeting of the Houses: but they were again prorogued to November.† It was not strange that the King did not wish to meet them: for he had determined to adopt a policy which he knew to be, in the highest degree, odious to them. From his predecessors he had inherited two prerogatives, of which the limits had

* Barillon, April $\frac{14}{24}$. 1686; Lady Russel to Dr. Fitzwilliam, April 14. "He sent away many," she says, "with sad hearts."

† London Gazette of May 13. 1686.

Digitized by Google

never been defined with strict accuracy, and which, if exerted without any limit, would of themselves have sufficed to overturn the whole polity of the State and of the Church. These were the dispensing power and the ecclesiastical supremacy. By means of the dispensing power, the King purposed to admit Roman Catholics, not merely to civil and military, but to spiritual, offices. By means of the ecclesiastical supremacy, he hoped to make the Anglican clergy his instruments for the destruction of their own religion.

This scheme developed itself by degrees. It was not thought safe to begin by granting to the whole Roman Catholic body a dispensation from all statutes imposing penalties and tests. For nothing was more fully established than that such a dispensation was illegal. The Cabal had, in 1672, put forth a general Declaration of Indulgence. The Commons, as soon as they met, had protested against it. Charles the Second had ordered it to be cancelled in his presence, and had, both by his own mouth and by a written message, assured the Houses that the step which had caused so much complaint should never be drawn into precedent. It would have been difficult to find in all the Inns of Court a barrister of reputation to argue in defence of a prerogative which the Sovereign, seated on his throne in full Parliament, had solemnly renounced a few years before. But it was not quite so clear that the King might not, on special grounds, grant exemptions to individuals by name. The first object of James, therefore, was to obtain from the courts of common law an acknowledgment that, to this extent at least, he possessed the dispensing power.

Dismission of refractory Judges.

But, though his pretensions were moderate when compared with those which he put forth a few months later, he soon found that he had against him almost the whole sense of West-

Digitized by Google

minster Hall. Four of the Judges gave him to understand that they could not, on this occasion, serve his purpose; and it is remarkable that all the four were violent Tories, and that among them were men who had accompanied Jeffreys on the Bloody Circuit, and who had been consenting to the death of Cornish and of Elizabeth Gaunt. Jones, the Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, a man who had never before shrunk from any drudgery, however cruel or servile, now held in the royal closet language which might have become the lips of the purest magistrates in our history. He was plainly told that he must either give up his opinion or his place. "For my place," he answered, "I care little. I am old and worn out in the service of the Crown: but I am mortified to find that Your Majesty thinks me capable of giving a judgment which none but an ignorant or a dishonest man could give." "I am determined," said the King, "to have twelve Judges who will be all of my mind as to this matter." "Your Majesty," answered Jones, "may find twelve Judges of your mind, but hardly twelve lawyers."* He was dismissed, together with Montague, Chief Baron of the Exchequer, and two puisne Judges, Neville and Charlton. One of the new Judges was Christopher Milton, younger brother of the great poet. Of Christopher little is known, except that, in the time of the civil war, he had been a Royalist, and that he now, in his old age, leaned towards Popery. It does not appear that he was ever formally reconciled to the Church of Rome: but he certainly had scruples about communicating with the Church of England, and had therefore a strong interest in supporting the dispensing power.†

* Reresby's Memoirs; Eachard, iii. 797.; Kennet, iii. 451.

† London Gazette, April 22. and 29. 1686; Barillon, April $\frac{18}{28}$.; Evelyn's Diary, June 2.; Luttrell's Diary, June 8.; Dodd's Church History.

Digitized by Google

The King found his counsel as refractory as his Judges. The first barrister who learned that he was expected to defend the dispensing power was the Solicitor General, Heneage Finch. He peremptorily refused, and was turned out of office on the following day.* The Attorney General, Sawyer, was ordered to draw warrants authorising members of the Church of Rome to hold benefices belonging to the Church of England. Sawyer had been deeply concerned in some of the harshest and most unjustifiable prosecutions of that age; and the Whigs abhorred him as a man stained with the blood of Russell and Sidney: but on this occasion he showed no want of honesty or of resolution. "Sir," said he, "this is not merely to dispense with a statute: it is to annul the whole statute law from the accession of Elizabeth to the present day. I dare not do it; and I implore Your Majesty to consider whether such an attack upon the rights of the Church be in accordance with your late gracious promises."† Sawyer would have been instantly dismissed, as Finch had been, if the government could have found a successor: but this was no easy matter. It was necessary, for the protection of the rights of the Crown, that one at least of the Crown lawyers should be a man of learning, ability, and experience; and no such man was willing to defend the dispensing power. The Attorney General was therefore permitted to retain his place during some months. Thomas Powis, an obscure barrister, who had no qualification for high employment except servility, was appointed Solicitor.

Case of Sir Edward Hales.

The preliminary arrangements were now complete. There was a Solicitor General to argue for the dispensing power, and a bench of Judges to decide in favour of it. The question was therefore speedily brought to a hearing. Sir Edward

* North's Life of Guildford, 288. † Reresby's Memoirs.

Digitized by Google

Hales, a gentleman of Kent, had been converted to Popery in days when it was not safe for any man of note openly to declare himself a Papist. He had kept his secret, and, when questioned, had affirmed that he was a Protestant with a solemnity which did little credit to his principles. When James had ascended the throne, disguise was no longer necessary. Sir Edward publicly apostatised, and was rewarded with the command of a regiment of foot. He had held his commission more than three months without taking the sacrament. He was therefore liable to a penalty of five hundred pounds, which an informer might recover by action of debt. A menial servant was employed to bring a suit for this sum in the Court of King's Bench. Sir Edward did not dispute the facts alleged against him, but pleaded that he had letters patent authorising him to hold his commission notwithstanding the Test Act. The plaintiff demurred, that is to say, admitted Sir Edward's plea to be true in fact, but denied that it was a sufficient answer. Thus was raised a simple issue of law to be decided by the court. A barrister, who was notoriously a tool of the government, appeared for the mock plaintiff, and made some feeble objections to the defendant's plea. The new Solicitor General replied. The Attorney General took no part in the proceedings. Judgment was given by the Lord Chief Justice, Sir Edward Herbert. He announced that he had submitted the question to all the twelve Judges, and that, in the opinion of eleven of them, the King might lawfully dispense with penal statutes in particular cases, and for special reasons of grave importance. The single dissentient, Baron Street, was not removed from his place. He was a man of morals so bad that his own relations shrank from him, and that the Prince of Orange, at the time of the Revolution, was advised not to see him. The character of Street makes it impossible to believe that

Digitized by Google

he would have been more scrupulous than his brethren. The character of James makes it impossible to believe that a refractory Baron of the Exchequer would have been permitted to retain his post. There can, therefore, be no reasonable doubt that the dissenting Judge was, like the plaintiff and the plaintiff's counsel, acting collusively. It was important that there should be a great preponderance of authority in favour of the dispensing power; yet it was important that the bench, which had been carefully packed for the occasion, should appear to be independent. One Judge, therefore, the least respectable of the twelve, was permitted, or more probably commanded, to give his voice against the prerogative.*

The power which the courts of law had thus recognised was not suffered to lie idle. Within a month after the decision of the King's Bench had been pronounced, four Roman Catholic Lords were sworn of the Privy Council. Two of them, Powis and Bellasyse, were of the moderate party, and probably took their seats with reluctance and with many sad forebodings. The other two, Arundell and Dover, had no such misgivings.†

Roman Catholics authorised to hold ecclesiastical benefices.

The dispensing power was, at the same time, employed for the purpose of enabling Roman Catholics to hold ecclesiastical preferment. The new Solicitor readily drew the warrants in which Sawyer had refused to be concerned. One of these warrants was in favour of a wretch named Edward Sclater, who had two livings which he was determined to keep through all changes. He administered the sacrament to his parishioners according to the rites of

Sclater.

* See the account of the case in the Collection of State Trials; Van Citters, May $\frac{4}{14}$., $\frac{\text{June } 22.}{\text{July } 2.}$ 1686; Evelyn's Diary, June 27.; Luttrell's Diary, June 21. As to Street, see Clarendon's Diary, Dec. 27. 1688.

† London Gazette, July 19. 1686.

Digitized by Google

the Church of England on Palm Sunday 1686. On Easter Sunday, only seven days later, he was at mass. The royal dispensation authorised him to retain the emoluments of his benefices. To the remonstrances of the patrons from whom he had received his preferment he replied in terms of insolent defiance, and, while the Roman Catholic cause prospered, put forth an absurd treatise in defence of his apostasy. But, a very few weeks after the Revolution, a great congregation assembled at Saint Mary's in the Savoy, to see him received again into the bosom of the Church which he had deserted. He read his recantation with tears flowing from his eyes, and pronounced a bitter invective against the Popish priests whose arts had seduced him.*

Walker.

Scarcely less infamous was the conduct of Obadiah Walker. He was an aged priest of the Church of England, and was well known in the University of Oxford as a man of learning. He had in the late reign been suspected of leaning towards Popery, but had outwardly conformed to the established religion, and had at length been chosen Master of University College. Soon after the accession of James, Walker determined to throw off the disguise which he had hitherto worn. He absented himself from the public worship of the Church of England, and, with some fellows and undergraduates whom he had perverted, heard mass daily in his own apartments. One of the first acts performed by the new Solicitor General was to draw up an instrument which authorised Walker and his proselytes to hold their benefices, notwithstanding their apostasy. Builders were immediately employed to turn two sets

* The letters patent are in Gutch's Collectanea Curiosa. The date is the 3d of May, 1686. See Sclater's Consensus Veterum; Gee's reply, entitled Veteres Vindicati; Dr. Anthony Horneck's account of Mr. Sclater's recantation of the errors of Popery on the 5th of May, 1689; Dodd's Church History, part viii. book ii. art. 3.

Digitized by Google

of rooms into an oratory. In a few weeks the Roman Catholic rites were publicly performed in University College. A Jesuit was quartered there as chaplain. A press was established there under royal license for the printing of Roman Catholic tracts. During two years and a half, Walker continued to make war on Protestantism with all the rancour of a renegade: but when fortune turned he showed that he wanted the courage of a martyr. He was brought to the bar of the House of Commons to answer for his conduct, and was base enough to protest that he had never changed his religion, that he had never cordially approved of the doctrines of the Church of Rome, and that he had never tried to bring any other person within the pale of that Church. It was hardly worth while to violate the most sacred obligations of law and of plighted faith, for the purpose of making such converts as these.*

The Deanery of Christchurch given to a Roman Catholic.

In a short time the King went a step further. Sclater and Walker had only been permitted to keep, after they became Papists, the preferment which had been bestowed on them while they passed for Protestants. To confer a high office in the Established Church on an avowed enemy of that Church was a far bolder violation of the laws and of the royal word. But no course was too bold for James. The Deanery of Christchurch became vacant. That office was, both in dignity and in emolument, one of the highest in the University of Oxford. The Dean was charged with the government of a greater number of youths of high connections and of great hopes than could be found in any other college. He was also the head of a Cathedral. In both characters it was necessary that he should be a member of the Church of

* Gutch's Collectanea Curiosa; Dodd, viii. ii. 3.; Wood, Ath. Ox.; Ellis Correspondence, Feb. 27. 1686; Commons' Journals, Oct. 26. 1689.

Digitized by Google

England. Nevertheless John Massey, who was notoriously a member of the Church of Rome, and who had not one single recommendation, except that he was a member of the Church of Rome, was appointed by virtue of the dispensing power; and soon, within the walls of Christchurch, an altar was decked, at which mass was daily celebrated.* To the Nuncio the King said that what had been done at Oxford should very soon be done at Cambridge.†

Yet even this was a small evil compared with that which Protestants had good ground to apprehend. It seemed but too probable that the whole government of the Anglican Church would shortly pass into the hands of her deadliest enemies. Three important sees had lately become vacant, that of York, that of Chester, and that of Oxford. The Bishopric of Oxford was given to Samuel Parker, a parasite, whose religion, if he had any religion, was that of Rome, and who called himself a Protestant only because he was encumbered with a wife. "I wished," the King said to Adda, "to appoint an avowed Catholic: but the time is not come. Parker is well inclined to us: he is one of us in feeling; and by degrees he will bring round his clergy."‡ The Bishopric of Chester, vacant by the death of John Pearson, a great name both in philology and in divinity, was bestowed on Thomas Cartwright, a still viler sycophant than Parker. The Archbishopric of York remained several years vacant. As no good reason could be found for leaving so important a place unfilled, men suspected that the nomination was delayed only till the King could venture to place the mitre on the head of an avowed Papist. It is indeed highly probable that the Church

Disposal of bishoprics.

* Gutch's Collectanea Curiosa; Wood's Athenæ Oxonienses; Dialogue between a Churchman and a Dissenter, 1689.

† Adda, July $\frac{8}{18}$. 1686.

‡ Adda, $\frac{\text{July } 30.}{\text{Aug. } 9.}$ 1686.

Digitized by Google

of England was saved from this outrage solely by the good sense and good feeling of the Pope. Without a special dispensation from Rome no Jesuit could be a Bishop; and Innocent could not be induced to grant such a dispensation to Petre.

Resolution of James to use his ecclesiastical supremacy against the Church.

James did not even make any secret of his intention to exert vigorously and systematically for the destruction of the Established Church all the powers which he possessed as her head. He plainly said that, by a wise dispensation of Providence, the Act of Supremacy would be the means of healing the fatal breach which it had caused. Henry and Elizabeth had usurped a dominion which rightfully belonged to the Holy See. That dominion had, in the course of succession, descended to an orthodox prince, and would be held by him in trust for the Holy See. He was authorised by law to repress spiritual abuses; and the first spiritual abuse which he would repress should be the liberty which the Anglican clergy assumed of defending their own religion and of attacking the doctrines of Rome.*

His difficulties.

But he was met by a great difficulty. The ecclesiastical supremacy which had devolved on him was by no means the same great and terrible prerogative which Elizabeth, James the First, and Charles the First had possessed. The enactment which annexed to the crown an almost boundless visitatorial authority over the Church, though it had

* "Ce prince m'a dit que Dieu avoit permis que toutes les loix qui ont été faites pour établir la réligion Protestante, et détruire la réligion Catholique, servent présentement de fondement à ce qu'il veut faire pour l'établissement de la vraie réligion, et le mettent en droit d'exercer un pouvoir encore plus grand que celui qu'ont les rois Catholiques sur les affaires ecclésiastiques dans les autres pays."—Barillon, July 13/23. 1686. To Adda His Majesty said, a few days later, "Che l'autorità concessale dal parlamento sopra l'Ecclesiastico senza alcun limite con fine contrario fosse adesso per servire al vantaggio de' medesimi Cattolici." July 23. Aug. 2.

Digitized by Google

never been formally repealed, had really lost a great part of its force. The substantive law remained; but it remained unaccompanied by any formidable sanction or by any efficient system of procedure, and was therefore little more than a dead letter.

The statute, which restored to Elizabeth the spiritual dominion assumed by her father and resigned by her sister, contained a clause authorising the sovereign to constitute a tribunal which might investigate, reform, and punish all ecclesiastical delinquencies. Under the authority given by this clause the Court of High Commission was created. That court was, during many years, the terror of Nonconformists, and, under the harsh administration of Laud, became an object of fear and hatred even to those who most loved the Established Church. When the Long Parliament met, the High Commission was generally regarded as the most grievous of the many grievances under which the nation laboured. An Act was therefore somewhat hastily passed, which not only took away from the Crown the power of appointing visitors to superintend the Church, but abolished all ecclesiastical courts without distinction.

After the Restoration, the Cavaliers who filled the House of Commons, zealous as they were for the prerogative, still remembered with bitterness the tyranny of the High Commission, and were by no means disposed to revive an institution so odious. They at the same time thought, and with reason, that the statute which had swept away all the courts Christian of the realm, without providing any substitute, was open to grave objection. They accordingly repealed that statute, with the exception of the part which related to the High Commission. Thus, the Archidiaconal Courts, the Consistory Courts, the Court of Arches, the Court of Peculiars, and the Court of Delegates were revived: but the enactment by which Elizabeth and her successors had been empowered

Digitized by Google

to appoint Commissioners with visitatorial authority over the Church was not only not revived, but was declared, with the utmost strength of language, to be completely abrogated. It is therefore as clear as any point of constitutional law can be that James the Second was not competent to appoint a Commission with power to visit and govern the Church of England.* But, if this were so, it was to little purpose that the Act of Supremacy, in high sounding words, empowered him to amend what was amiss in that Church. Nothing but a machinery as stringent as that which the Long Parliament had destroyed could force the Anglican clergy to become his agents for the destruction of the Anglican doctrine and discipline. He therefore, as early as the month of April 1686, determined to revive the Court of High Commission. This design was not immediately executed. It encountered the opposition of every minister who was not devoted to France and to the Jesuits. It was regarded by lawyers as an outrageous violation of the law, and by Churchmen as a direct attack upon the Church. Perhaps the contest might have lasted longer, but for an event which wounded the pride and inflamed the rage of the King. He had, as supreme ordinary, put forth directions, charging the clergy of the establishment to abstain from touching in their discourses on controverted points of doctrine. Thus, while sermons in defence of the Roman Catholic religion were preached on every Sunday and holiday within the precincts of the royal palaces, the Church of the state, the Church of the great majority of the nation, was forbidden to explain and vindicate her own principles. The spirit of the whole clerical order rose against this injustice. William Sherlock,

* The whole question is lucidly and unanswerably argued in a little contemporary tract, entitled "The King's Power in Matters Ecclesiastical fairly stated." See also a concise but forcible argument by Archbishop Sancroft, Doyly's Life of Sancroft, i. 92.

Digitized by Google

a divine of distinguished abilities, who had written with sharpness against Whigs and Dissenters, and had been rewarded by the government with the Mastership of the Temple and with a pension, was one of the first who incurred the royal displeasure. His pension was stopped; and he was severely reprimanded.* John Sharp, Dean of Norwich and Rector of Saint Giles's in the Fields, soon gave still greater offence. He was a man of learning and fervent piety, a preacher of great fame, and an exemplary parish priest. In politics he was, like most of his brethren, a Tory, and had just been appointed one of the royal chaplains. He received an anonymous letter which purported to come from one of his parishioners, who had been staggered by the arguments of Roman Catholic theologians, and who was anxious to be satisfied that the Church of England was a branch of the true Church of Christ. No divine, not utterly lost to all sense of religious duty and of professional honour, could refuse to answer such a call. On the following Sunday Sharp delivered an animated discourse against the high pretensions of the see of Rome. Some of his expressions were exaggerated, distorted, and carried by talebearers to Whitehall. It was falsely said that he had spoken with contumely of the theological disquisitions which had been found in the strong box of the late King, and which the present King had published. Compton, the Bishop of London, received orders from Sunderland to suspend Sharp till the royal pleasure should be further known. The Bishop was in great perplexity. His recent conduct in the House of Lords had given deep offence to the Court. Already his name had been struck out of the list of Privy Councillors. Already he had been dismissed from his office in the royal chapel. He was unwilling to give fresh provocation:

* Letter from James to Clarendon, Feb. 18. 168¾.

Digitized by Google

but the act which he was directed to perform was a judicial act. He felt that it was unjust, and he was assured by the best advisers that it was also illegal, to inflict punishment without giving any opportunity for defence. He accordingly, in the humblest terms, represented his difficulties to the King, and privately requested Sharp not to appear in the pulpit for the present. Reasonable as were Compton's scruples, obsequious as were his apologies, James was greatly incensed. What insolence to plead either natural justice or positive law in opposition to an express command of the Sovereign! Sharp was forgotten. The Bishop became a mark for the whole vengeance of the government.* The King felt more painfully than ever the want of that tremendous engine which had once coerced refractory ecclesiastics. He probably knew that, for a few angry words uttered against his father's government, Bishop Williams had been suspended by the High Commission from all ecclesiastical dignities and functions. The design of reviving that formidable tribunal was pushed on more eagerly than ever. In July, London was alarmed by the news that the King had, in direct defiance of two Acts of Parliament drawn in the strongest terms, entrusted the whole government of the Church to seven Commissioners.† The words in which the jurisdiction of these officers was described were loose, and might be stretched to almost any extent. All colleges and grammar schools, even those which had been founded by the liberality of private benefactors, were placed under the authority of the new board. All who depended for bread on situations in the Church or in academical institutions, from the Primate

He creates a new Court of High Commission.

* The best account of these transactions is in the Life of Sharp, by his son. Van Citters, June 29/July 9. 1686.

† Barillon, July 21/Aug. 1. 1686. Van Citters, July 14/24.; Privy Council Book, July 17.; Ellis Correspondence, July 17.; Evelyn's Diary, July 14.; Luttrell's Diary, August 5, 6.

Digitized by Google

down to the youngest curate, from the Vicechancellors of Oxford and Cambridge down to the humblest pedagogue who taught Corderius, were subjected to this despotic tribunal. If any one of those many thousands was suspected of doing or saying anything distasteful to the government, the Commissioners might cite him before them. In their mode of dealing with him they were fettered by no rule. They were themselves at once prosecutors and judges. The accused party was to be furnished with no copy of the charge. He was to be examined and crossexamined. If his answers did not give satisfaction, he was liable to be suspended from his office, to be ejected from it, to be pronounced incapable of holding any preferment in future. If he were contumacious, he might be excommunicated, or, in other words, be deprived of all civil rights and imprisoned for life. He might also, at the discretion of the court, be loaded with all the costs of the proceeding by which he had been reduced to beggary. No appeal was given. The Commissioners were directed to execute their office notwithstanding any law which might be, or might seem to be, inconsistent with these regulations. Lastly, lest any person should doubt that it was intended to revive that terrible court from which the Long Parliament had freed the nation, the new Visitors were directed to use a seal bearing exactly the same device and the same superscription with the seal of the old High Commission.*

The chief Commissioner was the Chancellor. His presence and assent were declared necessary to every proceeding. All men knew how unjustly, insolently, and barbarously he had acted in courts where he had been, to a certain extent, restrained by the known

* The device was a rose and crown. Before the device was the initial letter of the Sovereign's name; after it the letter R. Round the seal was this inscription, "Sigillum commissariorum regiæ majestatis ad causas ecclesiasticas."

Digitized by Google

laws of England. It was, therefore, not difficult to foresee how he would conduct himself in a situation in which he was at entire liberty to make forms of procedure and rules of evidence for himself.

Of the other six Commissioners three were prelates and three laymen. The name of Archbishop Sancroft stood first. But he was fully convinced that the court was illegal, that all its judgments would be null, and that by sitting in it he should incur a serious responsibility. He therefore determined not to comply with the royal mandate. He did not, however, act on this occasion with that courage and sincerity which he showed when driven to extremity two years later. He begged to be excused on the plea of business and ill health. The other members of the board, he added, were men of too much ability to need his assistance. These disingenuous apologies ill became the Primate of all England at such a crisis; nor did they avert the royal displeasure. Sancroft's name was not indeed struck out of the list of Privy Councillors: but, to the bitter mortification of the friends of the Church, he was no longer summoned on Council days. "If," said the King, "he is too sick or too busy to go to the Commission, it is a kindness to relieve him from attendance at Council." *

The government found no similar difficulty with Nathaniel Crewe, Bishop of the great and opulent see of Durham, a man nobly born, and raised so high in his profession that he could scarcely wish to rise higher, but mean, vain, and cowardly. He had been made Dean of the Chapel Royal when the Bishop of London was banished from the palace. The honour of being an Ecclesiastical Commissioner turned Crewe's head. It was to no purpose that some of his friends represented to him the risk which he ran by sitting in an illegal tribunal. He was not ashamed

* Append. to Clarendon's Diary; Van Citters, Oct. $\frac{1}{11}$. 1686; Barillon, Oct. $\frac{1}{31}$.; Doyly's Life of Sancroft

Digitized by Google

to answer that he could not live out of the royal smile, and exultingly expressed his hope that his name would appear in history, a hope which has not been altogether disappointed.*

Thomas Sprat, Bishop of Rochester, was the third clerical Commissioner. He was a man to whose talents posterity has scarcely done justice. Unhappily for his fame, it has been usual to print his verses in collections of the British poets; and those who judge of him by his verses must consider him as a servile imitator, who, without one spark of Cowley's admirable genius, mimicked whatever was least commendable in Cowley's manner: but those who are acquainted with Sprat's prose writings will form a very different estimate of his powers. He was indeed a great master of our language, and possessed at once the eloquence of the preacher, of the controversialist, and of the historian. His moral character might have passed with little censure had he belonged to a less sacred profession; for the worst that can be said of him is that he was indolent, luxurious, and worldly: but such failings, though not commonly regarded as very heinous in men of secular callings, are scandalous in a prelate. The Archbishopric of York was vacant: Sprat hoped to obtain it, and therefore accepted a seat at the ecclesiastical board: but he was too good-natured a man to behave harshly; and he was too sensible a man not to know that he might at some future time be called to a serious account by a Parliament. He therefore, though he consented to act, tried to do as little mischief, and to make as few enemies, as possible.†

The three remaining Commissioners were the Lord Treasurer, the Lord President, and the Chief Justice of the King's Bench. Rochester, disapproving and murmuring, consented to serve. Much as he had to

* Burnet, i. 676.

† Burnet, i. 675. ii. 629.; Sprat's Letters to Dorset.

Digitized by Google

endure at the Court, he could not bear to quit it. Much as he loved the Church, he could not bring himself to sacrifice for her sake his white staff, his patronage, his salary of eight thousand pounds a year, and the far larger indirect emoluments of his office. He excused his conduct to others, and perhaps to himself, by pleading that, as a Commissioner, he might be able to prevent much evil, and that, if he refused to act, some person less attached to the Protestant religion would be found to fill the vacant place. Sunderland was the representative of the Jesuitical cabal. Herbert's recent decision on the question of the dispensing power seemed to prove that he would not flinch from any service which the King might require.

Proceedings against the Bishop of London.

As soon as the Commission had been opened, the Bishop of London was cited before the new tribunal. He appeared. "I demand of you," said Jeffreys, "a direct and positive answer. Why did not you suspend Dr. Sharp?"

The Bishop requested a copy of the Commission in order that he might know by what authority he was thus interrogated. "If you mean," said Jeffreys, "to dispute our authority, I shall take another course with you. As to the Commission, I do not doubt that you have seen it. At all events you may see it in any coffeehouse for a penny." The insolence of the Chancellor's reply appears to have shocked the other Commissioners; and he was forced to make some awkward apologies. He then returned to the point from which he had started. "This," he said, "is not a court in which written charges are exhibited. Our proceedings are summary, and by word of mouth. The question is a plain one. Why did you not obey the King?" With some difficulty Compton obtained a brief delay, and the assistance of counsel. When the case had been heard, it was evident to all men that the Bishop had done only what he was bound to

Digitized by Google

do. The Treasurer, the Chief Justice, and Sprat were for acquittal. The King's wrath was moved. It seemed that his Ecclesiastical Commission would fail him as his Tory Parliament had failed him. He offered Rochester a simple choice, to pronounce the Bishop guilty, or to quit the Treasury. Rochester was base enough to yield. Compton was suspended from all spiritual functions; and the charge of his great diocese was committed to his judges, Sprat and Crewe. He continued, however, to reside in his palace and to receive his revenues; for it was known that, had any attempt been made to deprive him of his temporalities, he would have put himself under the protection of the common law; and Herbert himself declared that, at common law, judgment must be given against the crown. This consideration induced the King to pause. Only a few weeks had elapsed since he had packed the courts of Westminster Hall in order to obtain a decision in favour of his dispensing power. He now found that, unless he packed them again, he should not be able to obtain a decision in favour of the proceedings of his Ecclesiastical Commission. He determined, therefore, to postpone for a short time the confiscation of the freehold property of refractory clergymen.*

Discontent excited by the public display of Roman Catholic rites and vestments.

The temper of the nation was indeed such as might well make him hesitate. During some months discontent had been steadily and rapidly increasing. The celebration of the Roman Catholic worship had long been prohibited by Act of Parliament. During several generations no Roman Catholic clergyman had dared to exhibit himself in any public place with the badges of his office. Against the regular clergy, and against the restless and subtle Jesuits by name, had been enacted a succession of rigorous statutes.

* Burnet, i. 677.; Barillon, Sept. $\frac{8}{18}$. 1686. The public proceedings are in the Collection of State Trials.

Digitized by Google

Every Jesuit who set foot in this country was liable to be hanged, drawn, and quartered. A reward was offered for his detection. He was not allowed to take advantage of the general rule, that men are not bound to accuse themselves. Whoever was suspected of being a Jesuit might be interrogated, and, if he refused to answer, might be sent to prison for life.* These laws, though they had not, except when there was supposed to be some peculiar danger, been strictly executed, and though they had never prevented Jesuits from resorting to England, had made disguise necessary. But all disguise was now thrown off. Injudicious members of the King's Church, encouraged by him, took a pride in defying statutes which were still of undoubted validity, and feelings which had a stronger hold of the national mind than at any former period. Roman Catholic chapels rose all over the country. Cowls, girdles of ropes, and strings of beads constantly appeared in the streets, and astonished a population, the oldest of whom had never seen a conventual garb except on the stage. A convent rose at Clerkenwell on the site of the ancient cloister of Saint John. The Franciscans occupied a mansion in Lincoln's Inn Fields. The Carmelites were quartered in the City. A society of Benedictine monks was lodged in Saint James's Palace. In the Savoy a spacious house, including a church and a school, was built for the Jesuits.† The skill and care with which those fathers had, during several generations, conducted the education of youth, had drawn forth reluctant praises from the wisest Protestants. Bacon had pronounced the mode of instruction followed in the Jesuit colleges to be the best yet known in the world, and had warmly expressed his regret that so admirable a system of intellectual and moral discipline should be employed

* 27 Eliz. c. 2.; 2 Jac. 1. c. 34.; Jac. 1. c. 5.

† Life of James the Second, ii. 79, 80. Orig. Mem.

Digitized by Google

on the side of error.* It was not improbable that the new academy in the Savoy might, under royal patronage, prove a formidable rival to the great foundations of Eton, Westminster, and Winchester. Indeed, soon after the school was opened, the classes consisted of four hundred boys, about one half of whom were Protestants. The Protestant pupils were not required to attend mass: but there could be no doubt that the influence of able preceptors, devoted to the Roman Catholic Church, and versed in all the arts which win the confidence and affection of youth, would make many converts.

Riots.

These things produced great excitement among the populace, which is always more moved by what impresses the senses than by what is addressed to the reason. Thousands of rude and ignorant men, to whom the dispensing power and the Ecclesiastical Commission were words without a meaning, saw with dismay and indignation a Jesuit college rising on the banks of the Thames, friars in hoods and gowns walking in the Strand, and crowds of devotees pressing in at the doors of temples where homage was paid to graven images. Riots broke out in several parts of the country. At Coventry and Worcester the Roman Catholic worship was violently interrupted.† At Bristol the rabble, countenanced, it was said, by the magistrates, exhibited a profane and indecent pageant, in which the Virgin Mary was represented by a buffoon, and in which a mock host was carried in procession. Soldiers were called out to disperse the mob. The mob, then and ever since one of the fiercest in the kingdom, resisted. Blows were exchanged, and serious hurts inflicted.‡ The agitation was great in the capital, and greater in the City, properly so called, than at Westminster. For the people of Westminster had been accustomed

* De Augmentis, i. vi. 4.
† Van Citters, May $\frac{14}{24}$. 1686.
‡ Van Citters, May $\frac{18}{28}$. 1686; Adda, May $\frac{18}{28}$.

Digitized by Google

to see among them the private chapels of Roman Catholic Ambassadors: but the City had not, within living memory, been polluted by any idolatrous exhibition. Now, however, the resident of the Elector Palatine, encouraged by the King, fitted up a chapel in Lime Street. The heads of the corporation, though men selected for office on account of their known Toryism, protested against this proceeding, which, as they said, the ablest gentlemen of the long robe regarded as illegal. The Lord Mayor was ordered to appear before the Privy Council. "Take heed what you do," said the King. "Obey me; and do not trouble yourself either about gentlemen of the long robe or gentlemen of the short robe." The Chancellor took up the word, and reprimanded the unfortunate magistrate with the genuine eloquence of the Old Bailey bar. The chapel was opened. All the neighbourhood was soon in commotion. Great crowds assembled in Cheapside to attack the new mass house. The priests were insulted. A crucifix was taken out of the building and set up on the parish pump. The Lord Mayor came to quell the tumult, but was received with cries of "No wooden gods." The trainbands were ordered to disperse the crowd: but the trainbands shared in the popular feeling; and murmurs were heard from the ranks; "We cannot in conscience fight for Popery." *

The Elector Palatine was, like James, a sincere and zealous Catholic, and was, like James, the ruler of a Protestant people; but the two princes resembled each other little in temper and understanding. The Elector had promised to respect the rights of the Church which he found established in his dominions. He had strictly kept his word, and had not suffered

* Ellis Correspondence, April 27. 1686; Barillon, April $\frac{18}{28}$; Van Citters, April $\frac{28}{\text{May } 8}$; Privy Council Book, March 26.; Luttrell's Diary; Adda, $\frac{\text{Feb. 26.}}{\text{Mar. 8.}}$, $\frac{\text{Mar. 26.}}{\text{April 5.}}$, April $\frac{2}{12}$, $\frac{\text{April 23.}}{\text{May 3.}}$.

Digitized by Google

himself to be provoked to any violence by the indiscretion of preachers who, in their antipathy to his faith, occasionally forgot the respect which they owed to his person.* He learned, with concern, that great offence had been given to the people of London by the injudicious act of his representative, and, much to his honour, declared that he would forego the privilege to which, as a sovereign prince, he was entitled, rather than endanger the peace of a great city. "I, too," he wrote to James, "have Protestant subjects; and I know with how much caution and delicacy it is necessary that a Catholic prince so situated should act." James, instead of expressing gratitude for this humane and considerate conduct, turned the letter into ridicule before the foreign ministers. It was determined that the Elector should have a chapel in the City whether he would or not, and that, if the trainbands refused to do their duty, their place should be supplied by the Guards.†

The effect of these disturbances on trade was serious. The Dutch minister informed the States General that the business of the Exchange was at a stand. The Commissioners of the Customs reported to the King that, during the month which followed the opening of the Lime Street Chapel, the receipt in the port of the Thames had fallen off by some thousands of pounds.‡ Several Aldermen, who, though zealous royalists appointed under the new charter, were deeply interested in the commercial prosperity of their city, and loved neither Popery nor martial law, tendered their resignations. But the King was resolved not to yield. He formed a camp on Hounslow Heath, and collected there, within a circumference of about two miles and a half, fourteen battalions of foot and thirty two

A camp formed at Hounslow.

* Burnet's Travels.

† Barillon, $\frac{\text{May 27.}}{\text{June 6.}}$ 1686.

‡ Van Citters, $\frac{\text{May 25.}}{\text{June 4.}}$ 1686.

Digitized by Google

squadrons of horse, amounting to thirteen thousand fighting men. Twenty six pieces of artillery, and many wains laden with arms and ammunition, were dragged from the Tower through the City to Hounslow.* The Londoners saw this great force assembled in their neighbourhood with a terror which familiarity soon diminished. A visit to Hounslow became their favourite amusement on holidays. The camp presented the appearance of a vast fair. Mingled with the musketeers and dragoons, a multitude of fine gentlemen and ladies from Soho Square, sharpers and painted women from Whitefriars, invalids in sedans, monks in hoods and gowns, lacqueys in rich liveries, pedlars, orange girls, mischievous apprentices, and gaping clowns, was constantly passing and repassing through the long lanes of tents. From some pavilions were heard the noises of drunken revelry, from others the curses of gamblers. In truth the place was merely a gay suburb of the capital. The King, as was amply proved two years later, had greatly miscalculated. He had forgotten that vicinity operates in more ways than one. He had hoped that his army would overawe London: but the result of his policy was that the feelings and opinions of London took complete possession of his army.†

Scarcely indeed had the encampment been formed when there were rumours of quarrels between the Protestant and Popish soldiers.‡ A little tract, entitled A humble and hearty Address to all English Protestants in the Army, had been actively circulated through the ranks. The writer vehemently exhorted

* Ellis Correspondence, June 26. 1686; Van Citters, July $\frac{2}{12}$.; Luttrell's Diary, July 19.

† See the contemporary poems, entitled Hounslow Heath and Cæsar's Ghost; Evelyn's Diary, June 2. 1686. A ballad in the Pepysian Collection contains the following lines:—

"I liked the place beyond expressing,
I ne'er saw a camp so fine,
Not a maid in a plain dressing,
But might taste a glass of wine."

‡ Luttrell's Diary, June 18. 1686.

Digitized by Google

the troops to use their arms in defence, not of the mass book, but of the Bible, of the Great Charter, and of the Petition of Right. He was a man already under the frown of power. His character was remarkable, and his history not uninstructive.

His name was Samuel Johnson. He was a priest of the Church of England, and had been chaplain to Lord Russell. Johnson was one of those persons who are mortally hated by their opponents, and less loved than respected by their allies. His morals were pure, his religious feelings ardent, his learning and abilities not contemptible, his judgment weak, his temper acrimonious, turbulent, and unconquerably stubborn. His profession made him peculiarly odious to the zealous supporters of monarchy; for a republican in holy orders was a strange and almost an unnatural being. During the late reign Johnson had published a book entitled Julian the Apostate. The object of this work was to show that the Christians of the fourth century did not hold the doctrine of nonresistance. It was easy to produce passages from Chrysostom and Jerome written in a spirit very different from that of the Anglican divines who preached against the Exclusion Bill. Johnson, however, went further. He attempted to revive the odious imputation which had for very obvious reasons, been thrown by Libanius on the Christian soldiers of Julian, and insinuated that the dart which slew the imperial renegade came, not from the enemy, but from some Rumbold or Ferguson in the Roman ranks. A hot controversy followed. Whig and Tory disputants wrangled fiercely about an obscure passage, in which Gregory of Nazianzus praises a pious Bishop who was going to bastinado somebody. The Whigs maintained that the holy man was going to bastinado the Emperor; the Tories that, at the worst, he was only going to bastinado a captain of the guard. Johnson wrote a reply to his assailants,

Samuel Johnson.

Digitized by Google

in which he drew an elaborate parallel between Julian and James, then Duke of York. Julian had, during many years, pretended to abhor idolatry, while in heart an idolater. Julian had, to serve a turn, occasionally affected respect for the rights of conscience. Julian had punished cities which were zealous for the true religion, by taking away their municipal privileges. Julian had, by his flatterers, been called the Just. James was provoked beyond endurance. Johnson was prosecuted for a libel, convicted, and condemned to a fine which he had no means of paying. He was therefore kept in gaol; and it seemed likely that his confinement would end only with his life.*

Hugh Speke.

Over the room which he occupied in the King's Bench prison lodged another offender whose character well deserves to be studied. This was Hugh Speke, a young man of good family, but of a singularly base and depraved nature. His love of mischief and of dark and crooked ways amounted almost to madness. To cause confusion without being found out was his business and his pastime; and he had a rare skill in using honest enthusiasts as the instruments of his coldblooded malice. He had attempted, by means of one of his puppets, to fasten on Charles and James the crime of murdering Essex in the Tower. On this occasion the agency of Speke had been traced; and, though he succeeded in throwing the greater part of the blame on his dupe, he had not escaped with impunity. He was now a prisoner; but his fortune enabled him to live with comfort; and he was under so little restraint that he was able to keep up regular communication with one of his confederates who managed a secret press.

* See the memoirs of Johnson, prefixed to the folio edition of his life, his Julian, and his answers to his opponents. See also Hickes's Jovian.

Digitized by Google

Johnson was the very man for Speke's purposes, zealous and intrepid, a scholar and a practised controversialist, yet as simple as a child. A close intimacy sprang up between the two fellow prisoners. Johnson wrote a succession of bitter and vehement treatises which Speke conveyed to the printer. When the camp was formed at Hounslow, Speke urged Johnson to compose an address which might excite the troops to mutiny. The paper was instantly drawn up. Many thousands of copies were struck off and brought to Speke's room, whence they were distributed over the whole country, and especially among the soldiers. A milder government than that which then ruled England would have been moved to high resentment by such a provocation. Strict search was made. A subordinate agent who had been employed to circulate the address saved himself by giving up Johnson; and Johnson was not the man to save himself by giving up Speke. An information was filed, and a conviction obtained without difficulty. Julian Johnson, as he was popularly called, was sentenced to stand thrice in the pillory, and to be whipped from Newgate to Tyburn. The Judge, Sir Francis Withins, told the criminal to be thankful for the great lenity of the Attorney General, who might have treated the case as one of high treason. "I owe him no thanks," answered Johnson, dauntlessly. "Am I, whose only crime is that I have defended the Church and the laws, to be grateful for being scourged like a dog, while Popish scribblers are suffered daily to insult the Church and to violate the laws with impunity?" The energy with which he spoke was such that both the Judges and the crown lawyers thought it necessary to vindicate themselves, and to protest that they knew of no Popish publications such as those to which the prisoner alluded. He instantly drew from his pocket some Roman Catholic books and trinkets which were

Proceedings against Johnson.

Digitized by Google

then freely exposed for sale under the royal patronage, read aloud the titles of the books, and threw a rosary across the table to the King's counsel. "And now," he cried with a loud voice, "I lay this information before God, before this court, and before the English people. We shall soon see whether Mr. Attorney will do his duty."

It was resolved that, before the punishment was inflicted, Johnson should be degraded from the priesthood. The prelates who had been charged by the Ecclesiastical Commission with the care of the diocese of London cited him before them in the chapter house of Saint Paul's Cathedral. The manner in which he went through the ceremony made a deep impression on many minds. When he was stripped of his sacred robe he exclaimed, "You are taking away my gown because I have tried to keep your gowns on your backs." The only part of the formalities which seemed to distress him was the plucking of the Bible out of his hand. He made a faint struggle to retain the sacred book, kissed it, and burst into tears. "You cannot," he said, "deprive me of the hopes which I owe to it." Some attempts were made to obtain a remission of the flogging. A Roman Catholic priest offered to intercede in consideration of a bribe of two hundred pounds. The money was raised; and the priest did his best, but in vain. "Mr. Johnson," said the King, "has the spirit of a martyr; and it is fit that he should be one." William the Third said, a few years later, of one of the most acrimonious and intrepid Jacobites, "He has set his heart on being a martyr; and I have set mine on disappointing him." These two speeches would alone suffice to explain the widely different fates of the two princes.

The day appointed for the flogging came. A whip of nine lashes was used. Three hundred and seventeen stripes were inflicted; but the sufferer never

Digitized by Google

winced. He afterwards said that the pain was cruel, but that, as he was dragged at the tail of the cart, he remembered how patiently the cross had been borne up Mount Calvary, and was so much supported by the thought that, but for the fear of incurring the suspicion of vainglory, he would have sung a psalm with as firm and cheerful a voice as if he had been worshipping God in the congregation. It is impossible not to wish that so much heroism had been less alloyed by intemperance and intolerance.*

Zeal of the Anglican clergy against Popery.

Among the clergy of the Church of England Johnson found no sympathy. He had attempted to justify rebellion: he had even hinted approbation of regicide; and they still, in spite of much provocation, clung to the doctrine of nonresistance. But they saw with alarm and concern the progress of what they considered as a noxious superstition, and, while they abjured all thought of defending their religion by the sword, betook themselves manfully to weapons of a different kind. To preach against the errors of Popery was now regarded by them as a point of duty and a point of honour. The London clergy, who were then in abilities and influence decidedly at the head of their profession, set an example which was bravely followed by their ruder brethren all over the country. Had only a few bold men taken this freedom, they would probably have been at once cited before the Ecclesiastical Commission; but it was hardly possible to punish an offence which was committed every Sunday by thousands of divines, from Berwick to Penzance. The presses of the capital, of Oxford, and of Cambridge, never rested. The Act which subjected literature to a censorship did not seriously impede the

* Life of Johnson, prefixed to his works; Secret History of the happy Revolution, by Hugh Speke; State Trials; Van Citters, Nov. 23. Dec. 3. 1686. Van Citters gives the best account of the trial. I have seen a broadside which confirms his narrative.

Digitized by Google

exertions of Protestant controversialists; for that Act contained a proviso in favour of the two Universities, and authorised the publication of theological works licensed by the Archbishop of Canterbury. It was therefore out of the power of the government to silence the defenders of the established religion. They were a numerous, an intrepid, and a well appointed band of combatants. Among them were eloquent declaimers, expert dialecticians, scholars deeply read in the writings of the fathers and in all parts of ecclesiastical history. Some of them, at a later period, turned against one another the formidable arms which they had wielded against the common enemy, and by their fierce contentions and insolent triumphs brought reproach on the Church which they had saved. But at present they formed an united phalanx. In the van appeared a rank of steady and skilful veterans, Tillotson, Stillingfleet, Sherlock, Prideaux, Whitby, Patrick, Tenison, Wake. The rear was brought up by the most distinguished bachelors of arts who were studying for deacon's orders. Conspicuous amongst the recruits whom Cambridge sent to the field was a distinguished pupil of the great Newton, Henry Wharton, who had, a few months before, been senior wrangler of his year, and whose early death was soon after deplored by men of all parties as an irreparable loss to letters.* Oxford was not less proud of a youth, whose great powers, first essayed in this conflict, afterwards troubled the Church and the State during forty eventful years, Francis Atterbury. By such men as these every question in issue between the Papists and the Protestants was debated, sometimes in a popular style which boys and women could comprehend, sometimes with the utmost subtlety of logic, and sometimes with an immense display of learning. The pretensions of the

* See the preface to Henry Wharton's Posthumous Sermons.

Digitized by Google

Holy See, the authority of tradition, purgatory, transubstantiation, the sacrifice of the mass, the adoration of the host, the denial of the cup to the laity, confession, penance, indulgences, extreme unction, the invocation of saints, the adoration of images, the celibacy of the clergy, the monastic vows, the practice of celebrating public worship in a tongue unknown to the multitude, the corruptions of the court of Rome, the history of the Reformation, the characters of the chief Reformers, were copiously discussed. Great numbers of absurd legends about miracles wrought by saints and relics were translated from the Italian, and published as specimens of the priestcraft by which the greater part of Christendom had been fooled. Of the tracts put forth on these subjects by Anglican divines during the short reign of James the Second many have probably perished. Those which may still be found in our great libraries make up a mass of near twenty thousand pages.*

The Roman Catholic divines overmatched.

The Roman Catholics did not yield the victory without a struggle. One of them, named Henry Hills, had been appointed printer to the royal household and chapel, and had been placed by the King at the head of a great office in London from which theological tracts came forth by hundreds. Obadiah Walker's press was not less active at Oxford. But, with the exception of some bad translations of Bossuet's admirable works, these establishments put forth nothing of the smallest value. It was indeed impossible for any intelligent and candid Roman Catholic to deny that the champions of his Church were, in every talent and acquirement, completely overmatched. The ablest of them

* This I can attest from my own researches. There is an excellent collection in the British Museum. Birch tells us, in his Life of Tillotson, that Archbishop Wake had not been able to form even a perfect catalogue of all the tracts published in this controversy.

Digitized by Google

would not, on the other side, have been considered as of the third rate. Many of them, even when they had something to say, knew not how to say it. They had been excluded by their religion from English schools and universities; nor had they ever, till the accession of James, found England an agreeable, or even a safe, residence. They had therefore passed the greater part of their lives on the Continent, and had almost unlearned their mother tongue. When they preached, their outlandish accent moved the derision of the audience. They spelt like washerwomen. Their diction was disfigured by foreign idioms; and, when they meant to be eloquent, they imitated, as well as they could, what was considered as fine writing in those Italian academies where rhetoric had then reached the last stage of corruption. Disputants labouring under these disadvantages would scarcely, even with truth on their side, have been able to make head against men whose style is eminently distinguished by simple purity and grace.*

* Cardinal Howard spoke strongly to Burnet at Rome on this subject. Burnet, i. 662. There is a curious passage to the same effect in a despatch of Barillon or Bonrepaux: but I have mislaid the reference.

One of the Roman Catholic divines who engaged in this controversy, a Jesuit named Andrew Pulton, whom Mr. Oliver, in his biography of the Order, pronounces to have been a man of distinguished ability, very frankly owns his deficiencies. "A. P., having been eighteen years out of his own country, pretends not yet to any perfection of the English expression or orthography." His spelling is indeed deplorable. In one of his letters wright is put for write, woed for would. He challenged Tenison to dispute with him in Latin, that they might be on equal terms. In a contemporary satire, entitled the Advice, is the following couplet:—

"Send Pulton to be lashed at Busby's school,
That he in print no longer play the fool."

Another Roman Catholic, named William Clench, wrote a treatise on the Pope's supremacy, and dedicated it to the Queen in Italian. The following specimen of his style may suffice. "O del sagro marito fortunata consorte! O dolce alleviamento d'affari alti! O grato ristoro di pensieri noiosi, nel cui petto latteo, lucente specchio d'illibata matronal pudicizia, nel cui seno odorato, come in porto d'amor, si ritira il Giacomo! O beata regia coppia! O felice

Digitized by Google

The situation of England in the year 1686 cannot be better described than in the words of the French Ambassador. "The discontent," he wrote, "is great and general: but the fear of incurring still worse evils restrains all who have anything to lose. The King openly expresses his joy at finding himself in a situation to strike bold strokes. He likes to be complimented on this subject. He has talked to me about it, and has assured me that he will not flinch." *

Meanwhile in other parts of the empire events of grave importance had taken place. The situation of the episcopalian Protestants of Scotland differed widely from that in which their English brethren stood. In the south of the island the religion of the state was the religion of the people, and had a strength altogether independent of the strength derived from the support of the government. The sincere conformists were far more numerous than the Papists and the Protestant Dissenters taken together. The Established Church of Scotland was the Church of a minority. The lowland population was generally attached to the Presbyterian discipline. Prelacy was abhorred by the great body of Scottish Protestants, both as an unscriptural and as a foreign institution. It was regarded by the disciples of Knox as a relic of the abominations of Babylon the Great. It painfully reminded a people proud of the memory of Wallace and Bruce that Scotland, since her sovereigns had succeeded to a

State of Scotland.

inserto tra l' invincibil leoni e le candide aquile!"

Clench's English is of a piece with his Tuscan. For example, "Peter signifies an inexpugnable rock, able to evacuate all the plots of hell's divan, and naufragate all the lurid designs of empoisoned heretics."

Another Roman Catholic treatise, entitled "The Church of England truly represented," begins by informing us that "the ignis fatuus of reformation, which had grown to a comet by many acts of spoil and rapine, had been ushered into England, purified of the filth which it had contracted among the lakes of the Alps."

* Barillon, July $\frac{13}{23}$. 1686.

Digitized by Google

fairer inheritance, had been independent in name only. The episcopal polity was also closely associated in the public mind with all the evils produced by twenty five years of corrupt and cruel maladministration. Nevertheless this polity stood, though on a narrow basis and amidst fearful storms, tottering indeed, yet upheld by the civil magistrate, and leaning for support, whenever danger became serious, on the power of England. The records of the Scottish Parliament were thick set with laws denouncing vengeance on those who in any direction strayed from the prescribed pale. By an Act passed in the time of Knox, and breathing his spirit, it was a high crime to hear mass, and the third offence was capital.* An Act recently passed, at the instance of James, made it death to preach in any Presbyterian conventicle whatever, and even to attend such a conventicle in the open air.† The Eucharist was not, as in England, degraded into a civil test; but no person could hold any office, could sit in Parliament, or could even vote for a member of Parliament, without subscribing, under the sanction of an oath, a declaration which condemned in the strongest terms the principles both of the Papists and of the Covenanters.‡

Queensberry.

In the Privy Council of Scotland there were two parties corresponding to the two parties which were contending against each other at Whitehall. William Douglas, Duke of Queensberry, was Lord Treasurer, and had, during some years, been considered as first minister. He was nearly connected by affinity, by similarity of opinions, and by similarity of temper, with the Treasurer of England. Both were Tories: both were men of hot temper and strong prejudices: both were ready to support their master in any attack on the civil liber-

* Act Parl. Aug. 24. 1560; Dec. 15. 1567.

† Act Parl. May 8. 1685.

‡ Act Parl. Aug. 31. 1681.

Digitized by Google

ties of his people; but both were sincerely attached to the Established Church. Queensberry had early notified to the court that, if any innovation affecting that Church were contemplated, to such innovation he could be no party. But among his colleagues were several men not less unprincipled than Sunderland. In truth the Council chamber at Edinburgh had been, during a quarter of a century, a seminary of all public and all private vices; and some of the politicians whose character had been formed there had a peculiar hardness of heart and forehead to which Westminster, even in that bad age, could hardly show anything quite equal. The Chancellor, James Drummond, Earl of Perth, and his brother, the Secretary of State, John Lord Melfort, were bent on supplanting Queensberry. The Chancellor had already an unquestionable title to the royal favour. He had brought into use a little steel thumbscrew which gave such exquisite torment that it had wrung confessions even out of men on whom His Majesty's favourite boot had been tried in vain.* But it was well known that even barbarity was not so sure a way to the heart of James as apostasy. To apostasy, therefore, Perth and Melfort resorted with a certain audacious baseness which no English statesman could hope to emulate. They declared that the papers found in the strong box of Charles the Second had converted them both to the true faith; and they began to confess and to hear mass.† How little conscience had to do with Perth's change of religion he amply proved by taking to wife, a few weeks later, in direct defiance of the laws of the Church which he had just joined, a lady who was his cousin german, without waiting for a dispensation. When the good Pope learned this, he said, with scorn and indignation which well became him,

Perth and Melfort.

* Burnet, i. 584.

† Ibid i. 652, 653.

Digitized by Google

that this was a strange sort of conversion.* But James was more easily satisfied. The apostates presented themselves at Whitehall, and there received such assurances of his favour, that they ventured to bring direct charges against the Treasurer. Those charges, however, were so evidently frivolous that James was forced to acquit the accused minister; and many thought that the Chancellor had ruined himself by his malignant eagerness to ruin his rival. There were a few, however, who judged more correctly. Halifax, to whom Perth expressed some apprehensions, answered with a sneer that there was no danger. "Be of good cheer, my Lord: thy faith hath made thee whole." The prediction was correct. Perth and Melfort went back to Edinburgh, the real heads of the government of their country.† Another member of the Scottish Privy Council, Alexander Stuart, Earl of Murray, the descendant and heir of the Regent, abjured the religion of which his illustrious ancestor had been the foremost champion, and declared himself a member of the Church of Rome. Devoted as Queensberry had always been to the cause of prerogative, he could not stand his ground against competitors who were willing to pay such a price for the favour of the Court. He had to endure a succession of mortifications and humiliations similar to those which, about the same time, began to embitter the life of his friend Rochester. Royal letters came down authorising Papists to hold offices without taking the test. The clergy were strictly charged not to reflect on the Roman Catholic religion in their discourses. The Chancellor took on himself to send the macers of the Privy Council round to the few printers and booksellers who could then be found in Edinburgh, charging them not to publish any work without his license. It was well understood that this

Favour shown to the Roman Catholic religion in Scotland.

* Burnet, i. 678.

† Ibid. i. 653.

Digitized by Google

order was intended to prevent the circulation of Protestant treatises. One honest stationer told the messengers that he had in his shop a book which reflected in very coarse terms on Popery, and begged to know whether he might sell it. They asked to see it; and he showed them a copy of the Bible.* A cargo of copes, images, beads, crosses and censers arrived at Leith directed to Lord Perth. The importation of such articles had long been considered as illegal; but now the officers of the customs allowed the superstitious garments and trinkets to pass.† In a short time it was known that a Popish chapel had been fitted up in the Chancellor's house, and that mass was regularly said there. The mob rose. The mansion where the idolatrous rites were celebrated was fiercely attacked. The iron bars which protected the windows were wrenched off. Lady Perth and some of her female friends were pelted with mud. One rioter was seized, and ordered by the Privy Council to be whipped. His fellows rescued him and beat the hangman. The city was all night in confusion. The students of the University mingled with the crowd and animated the tumult. Zealous burghers drank the health of the college lads and confusion to Papists, and encouraged each other to face the troops. The troops were already under arms. They were received with a shower of stones, which wounded an officer. Orders were given to fire; and several citizens were killed. The disturbance was serious; but the Drummonds, inflamed by resentment and ambition, exaggerated it strangely. Queensberry observed that their reports would lead any person, who had not witnessed what had passed, to believe that a sedition as formidable as that of Masaniello had been raging at Edinburgh. The brothers in return accused the Treasurer, not only of

Riots at Edinburgh.

* Fountainhall, Jan. 28. 168⅞.

† Ibid. Jan. 11. 168⅞.

Digitized by Google

extenuating the crime of the insurgents, but of having himself prompted it, and did all in their power to obtain evidence of his guilt. One of the ringleaders, who had been taken, was offered a pardon if he would own that Queensberry had set him on; but the same religious enthusiasm, which had impelled the unhappy prisoner to criminal violence, prevented him from purchasing his life by a calumny. He and several of his accomplices were hanged. A soldier, who was accused of exclaiming, during the affray, that he should like to run his sword through a Papist, was shot; and Edinburgh was again quiet: but the sufferers were regarded as martyrs; and the Popish Chancellor became an object of mortal hatred, which in no long time was largely gratified.*

Anger of the King.

The King was much incensed. The news of the tumult reached him when the Queen, assisted by the Jesuits, had just triumphed over Lady Dorchester and her Protestant allies. The malecontents should find, he declared, that the only effect of the resistance offered to his will was to make him more and more resolute.† He sent orders to the Scottish Council to punish the guilty with the utmost severity, and to make unsparing use of the boot.‡ He pretended to be fully convinced of the Treasurer's innocence, and wrote to that minister in gracious words; but the gracious words were accompanied by ungracious acts. The Scottish Treasury was put into commission in spite of the earnest remonstrances of Rochester, who probably saw his own fate prefigured in that of his kinsman.§ Queensberry

* Fountainhall, Jan. 31. and Feb. 1. 168⅘; Burnet, i. 678.; Trials of David Mowbray and Alexander Keith, in the Collection of State Trials; Bonrepaux, Feb. ⅓.

† Lewis to Barillon, Feb. ⅓. 1686.

‡ Fountainhall, Feb. 16.; Wodrow, book iii. chap. x. sec. 3. "We require," His Majesty graciously wrote, "that you spare no legal trial by torture or otherwise."

§ Bonrepaux, Feb. ⅓. 1686.

Digitized by Google

was, indeed, named First Commissioner, and was made President of the Privy Council: but his fall, though thus broken, was still a fall. He was also removed from the government of the castle of Edinburgh, and was succeeded in that confidential post by the Duke of Gordon, a Roman Catholic.*

His plans concerning Scotland.

And now a letter arrived from London, fully explaining to the Scottish Privy Council the intentions of the King. What he wanted was that the Roman Catholics should be exempted from all laws imposing penalties and disabilities on account of nonconformity, but that the persecution of the Covenanters should go on without mitigation.† This scheme encountered strenuous opposition in the Council. Some members were unwilling to see the existing laws relaxed. Others, who were by no means averse to relaxation, felt that it would be monstrous to admit Roman Catholics to the highest honours of the State, and yet to leave unrepealed the Act which made it death to attend a Presbyterian conventicle. The answer of the board was, therefore, less obsequious than usual.

Deputation of Scotch Privy Councillors sent to London.

The King in reply sharply reprimanded his undutiful Councillors, and ordered three of them, the Duke of Hamilton, Sir George Lockhart, and General Drummond, to attend him at Westminster. Hamilton's abilities and knowledge, though by no means such as would have sufficed to raise an obscure man to eminence, appeared highly respectable in one who was premier peer of Scotland. Lockhart had long been regarded as one of the first jurists, logicians, and orators that his country had produced, and enjoyed also that sort of consideration which is derived from large possessions; for his estate was such as at that time very few Scottish nobles

* Fountainhall, March 11. 1686; Adda, March $\frac{1}{11}$.

† This letter is dated March 4. 1686.

Digitized by Google

possessed.* He had been lately appointed President of the Court of Session. Drummond, a cousin of Perth and Melfort, was commander of the forces in Scotland. He was a loose and profane man: but a sense of honour which his two kinsmen wanted restrained him from public apostasy. He lived and died, in the significant phrase of one of his countrymen, a bad Christian, but a good Protestant.†

James was pleased by the dutiful language which the three Councillors used when first they appeared before him. He spoke highly of them to Barillon, and particularly extolled Lockhart as the ablest and most eloquent Scotchman living. They soon proved, however, less tractable than had been expected; and it was rumoured at Court that they had been perverted by the company which they had kept in London. Hamilton lived much with zealous churchmen; and it might be feared that Lockhart, who was related to the Wharton family, had fallen into still worse society. In truth it was natural that statesmen, fresh from a country where opposition in any other form than that of insurrection and assassination had long been almost unknown, and where all that was not lawless fury was abject submission, should have been struck by the earnest and stubborn, yet sober, discontent which pervaded England, and should have been emboldened to try the experiment of constitutional resistance to the royal will. They indeed declared themselves willing to grant large relief to the Roman Catholics; but on two conditions; first, that similar indulgence should be extended to the Calvinistic sectaries; and, secondly, that the King should bind himself by a solemn promise not to attempt anything to the prejudice of the Protestant religion.

* Barillon, April $\frac{18}{28}$. 1686; Burnet, i. 379.

† The words are in a letter of Johnstone of Waristoun.

Digitized by Google

Both conditions were highly distasteful to James. He reluctantly agreed, however, after a dispute which lasted several days, that some indulgence should be granted to the Presbyterians: but he would by no means consent to allow them the full liberty which he demanded for members of his own communion.* To the second condition proposed by the three Scottish Councillors he positively refused to listen. The Protestant religion, he said, was false; and he would not give any guarantee that he would not use his power to the prejudice of a false religion. The altercation was long, and was not brought to a conclusion satisfactory to either party.† Their negotiations with the King.

The time fixed for the meeting of the Scottish Estates drew near; and it was necessary that the three Councillors should leave London to attend their parliamentary duty at Edinburgh. On this occasion another affront was offered to Queensberry. In the late session he had held the office of Lord High Commissioner, and had in that capacity represented the majesty of the absent King. This dignity, the greatest to which a Scottish noble could aspire, was now transferred to the renegade Murray. Meeting of the Scotch Estates.

On the twenty-ninth of April the Parliament met at Edinburgh. A letter from the King was read. He exhorted the Estates to give relief to his Roman Catholic subjects, and offered in return a free trade with England and an amnesty for political offences. A committee was appointed to draw up an answer. That committee, though named They prove refractory.

* Some words of Barillon deserve to be transcribed. They would alone suffice to decide a question which ignorance and party spirit have done much to perplex. "Cette liberté accordée aux nonconformistes a faite une grande difficulté, et a été débattue pendant plusieurs jours. Le Roy d'Angleterre avoit fort envie que les Catholiques eussent seuls la liberté de l'exercice de leur religion." April $\frac{13}{23}$. 1686.

† Barillon, April $\frac{13}{23}$. 1686; Citters, April $\frac{13}{23}$., May $\frac{2}{12}$.

Digitized by Google

by Murray, and composed of Privy Councillors and courtiers, framed a reply, full indeed of dutiful and respectful expressions, yet clearly indicating a determination to refuse what the King demanded. The Estates, it was said, would go as far as their consciences would allow to meet His Majesty's wishes respecting his subjects of the Roman Catholic religion. These expressions were far from satisfying the Chancellor; yet, such as they were, he was forced to content himself with them, and even had some difficulty in persuading the Parliament to adopt them. Objection was taken by some zealous Protestants to the mention made of the Roman Catholic religion. There was no such religion. There was an idolatrous apostasy, which the laws punished with the halter, and to which it did not become Christian men to give flattering titles. To call such a superstition Catholic was to give up the whole question which was at issue between Rome and the reformed Churches. The offer of a free trade with England was treated as an insult. "Our fathers," said one orator, "sold their king for southern gold; and we still lie under the reproach of that foul bargain. Let it not be said of us that we have sold our God!" Sir John Lauder of Fountainhall, one of the Senators of the College of Justice, suggested the words, "the persons commonly called Roman Catholics." "Would you nickname His Majesty?" exclaimed the Chancellor. The answer drawn by the committee was carried; but a large and respectable minority voted against the proposed words as too courtly.* It was remarked that the representatives of the towns were, almost to a man, against the government. Hitherto those members had been of very small account in the Parliament, and had generally been considered as the retainers of powerful noblemen. They now showed,

* Fountainhall, May 6. 1686.

Digitized by Google

for the first time, an independence, a resolution, and a spirit of combination which alarmed the court.*

The answer was so unpleasing to James that he did not suffer it to be printed in the Gazette. Soon he learned that a law, such as he wished to see passed, would not even be brought in. The Lords of Articles, whose business was to draw up the Acts on which the Estates were afterwards to deliberate, were virtually nominated by himself. Yet even the Lords of Articles proved refractory. When they met, the three Privy Councillors who had lately returned from London took the lead in opposition to the royal will. Hamilton declared plainly that he could not do what was asked. He was a faithful and loyal subject; but there was a limit imposed by conscience. "Conscience!" said the Chancellor: "conscience is a vague word, which signifies any thing or nothing." Lockhart, who sate in Parliament as representative of the great county of Lanark, struck in. "If conscience," he said, "be a word without meaning, we will change it for another phrase which, I hope, means something. For conscience let us put the fundamental laws of Scotland." These words raised a fierce debate. General Drummond, who represented Perthshire, declared that he agreed with Hamilton and Lockhart. Most of the Bishops present took the same side.†

* Fountainhall, June 15. 1686.

† Van Citters, May $\frac{11}{21}$. 1686. Van Citters informed the States that he had his intelligence from a sure hand. I will transcribe part of his narrative. It is an amusing specimen of the pyebald dialect in which the Dutch diplomatists of that age corresponded.

"Des konigs missive, boven en behalven den Hoog Commissaris aensprake, aen het parlement afgesonden, gelyck dat altoos gebruyckelyck is, waerby Syne Majesteyt nu in genere versocht hieft de mitigatie der rigoureuse ofte sanglante wetten van het Ryck jegens het Pausdom, in het Generale Comitée des Articles (soo men het daer naemt) na ordre gestelt en gelesen synde, in 't voteren, den Hertog van Hamilton onder anderen klaer uyt seyde dat hy daertoe niet soude verstaen, dat hy anders genegen was den konig in allen voorval ge-

Digitized by Google

It was plain that, even in the Committee of Articles, James could not command a majority. He was mortified and irritated by the tidings. He held warm and menacing language, and punished some of his mutinous servants, in the hope that the rest would take warning. Several persons were dismissed from the Council board. Several were deprived of pensions, which formed an important part of their income. Sir George Mackenzie of Rosehaugh was the most distinguished victim. He had long held the office of Lord Advocate, and had taken such a part in the persecution of the Covenanters that to this day he holds, in the estimation of the austere and godly peasantry of Scotland, a place not far removed from the unenviable eminence occupied by Claverhouse. The legal learning of Mackenzie was not profound: but, as a scholar, a wit, and an orator, he stood high in the opinion of his countrymen; and his renown had spread even to the coffeehouses of London and to the cloisters of Oxford. The remains of his forensic speeches prove him to have been a man of parts, but are somewhat disfigured by what he doubtless considered as Ciceronian graces, interjections which show more art than passion, and elaborate amplifications, in which epithet rises above epithet in wearisome climax. He had now, for the first time,

trouw te dienen volgens het dictamen syner conscientie: 't gene reden gaf aen de Lord Cancelier de Grave Perts te seggen dat het woort conscientie niets en beduyde, en alleen een individuum vagum was, waerop der Chevalier Locquard dan verder gingh; wil man niet verstaen de betyckenis van het woordt conscientie, soo sal ik in fortioribus seggen dat wy meynen volgens de fondamentale wetten van het ryck."

There is, in the Hind Let Loose, a curious passage to which I should have given no credit, but for this despatch of Van Citters. "They cannot endure so much as to hear of the name of conscience. One that was well acquaint with the Council's humour in this point told a gentleman that was going before them, 'I beseech you, whatever you do, speak nothing of conscience before the Lords, for they cannot abide to hear that word.'"

Digitized by Google

been found scrupulous. He was, therefore, in spite of all his claims on the gratitude of the government, deprived of his office. He retired into the country, and soon after went up to London for the purpose of clearing himself, but was refused admission to the royal presence.* While the King was thus trying to terrify the Lords of Articles into submission, the popular voice encouraged them to persist. The utmost exertions of the Chancellor could not prevent the national sentiment from expressing itself through the pulpit and the press. One tract, written with such boldness and acrimony that no printer dared to put it in type, was widely circulated in manuscript. The papers which appeared on the other side of the question had much less effect, though they were disseminated at the public charge, and though the Scottish defenders of the government were assisted by an English auxiliary of great note, Lestrange, who had been sent down to Edinburgh, and lodged in Holyrood House.†

At length, after three weeks of debate, the Lords of Articles came to a decision. They proposed merely that Roman Catholics should be permitted to worship God in private houses without incurring any penalty; and it soon appeared that, far as this measure was from coming up to the King's demands and expectations, the Estates either would not pass it at all, or would pass it with great restrictions and modifications.

While the contest lasted the anxiety in London was intense. Every report, every line, from Edinburgh was eagerly devoured. One day the story ran that Hamilton had given way, and that the government would carry every point. Then came intelligence that the opposition had rallied and was more obstinate than ever. At the most critical moment, orders were sent to the postoffice that the bags from

* Fountainhall, May 17. 1686 † Wodrow, III. x. 3.

Digitized by Google

Scotland should be transmitted to Whitehall. During a whole week, not a single private letter from beyond the Tweed was delivered in London. In our age, such an interruption of communication would throw the whole island into confusion: but there was then so little trade and correspondence between England and Scotland that the inconvenience was probably much smaller than has been often occasioned in our own time by a short delay in the arrival of the Indian mail. While the ordinary channels of information were thus closed, the crowd in the galleries of Whitehall observed with attention the countenances of the King and his ministers. It was noticed, with great satisfaction, that, after every express from the North, the enemies of the Protestant religion looked more and more gloomy. At length, to the general joy, it was announced that the struggle was over, that the government had been unable to carry its measures, and that the Lord High Commissioner had adjourned the Parliament.*

They are adjourned.

If James had not been proof to all warning, these events would have sufficed to warn him. A few months before this time, the most obsequious of English Parliaments had refused to submit to his pleasure. But the most obsequious of English Parliaments might be regarded as an independent and even as a mutinous assembly when compared with any Parliament that had ever sate in Scotland; and the servile spirit of Scottish Parliaments was always to be found in the highest perfection, extracted and condensed, among the Lords of Articles. Yet even the Lords of Articles had been refractory. It was plain that all those classes, all those institutions, which, up to this year, had been considered as the strongest supports of monarchical

Arbitrary system of government in Scotland.

* Van Citters, $\frac{\text{May } 28.}{\text{June } 7.}$, June $\frac{1}{11}$. $\frac{4}{14}$. 1686; Fountainhall, June 15.; Luttrell's Diary, June 2. 16.

Digitized by Google

power, must, if the King persisted in his insane policy, be reckoned as parts of the strength of the opposition. All these signs, however, were lost upon him. To every expostulation he had one answer: he would never give way; for concession had ruined his father; and his unconquerable firmness was loudly applauded by the French embassy and by the Jesuitical cabal.

He now proclaimed that he had been only too gracious when he had condescended to ask the assent of the Scottish Estates to his wishes. His prerogative would enable him, not only to protect those whom he favoured, but to punish those who had crossed him. He was confident that, in Scotland, his dispensing power would not be questioned by any court of law. There was a Scottish Act of Supremacy which gave to the sovereign such a control over the Church as might have satisfied Henry the Eighth. Accordingly Papists were admitted in crowds to offices and honours. The Bishop of Dunkeld, who, as a Lord of Parliament, had opposed the government, was arbitrarily ejected from his see, and a successor was appointed. Queensberry was stripped of all his employments, and was ordered to remain at Edinburgh till the accounts of the Treasury during his administration had been examined and approved.* As the representatives of the towns had been found the most unmanageable part of the Parliament, it was determined to make a revolution in every burgh throughout the kingdom. A similar change had recently been effected in England by judicial sentences: but in Scotland a simple mandate of the prince was thought sufficient. All elections of magistrates and of town councils were prohibited; and the King assumed to himself the right of filling up the chief municipal offices.† In a formal letter to the Privy Council he announced his

* Fountainhall, June 21. 1686. † Ibid. Sept. 16. 1686.

Digitized by Google

intention to fit up a Roman Catholic chapel in his palace of Holyrood; and he gave orders that the Judges should be directed to treat all the laws against Papists as null, on pain of his high displeasure. He however comforted the Protestant Episcopalians by assuring them that, though he was determined to protect the Roman Catholic Church against them, he was equally determined to protect them against any encroachment on the part of the fanatics. To this communication Perth proposed an answer couched in the most servile terms. The Council now contained many Papists: the Protestant members who still had seats had been cowed by the King's obstinacy and severity; and only a few faint murmurs were heard. Hamilton threw out against the dispensing power some hints which he made haste to explain away. Lockhart said that he would lose his head rather than sign such a letter as the Chancellor had drawn, but took care to say this in a whisper which was heard only by friends. Perth's words were adopted with inconsiderable modifications; and the royal commands were obeyed; but a sullen discontent spread through that minority of the Scottish nation by the aid of which the government had hitherto held the majority down.*

Ireland.

When the historian of this troubled reign turns to Ireland, his task becomes peculiarly difficult and delicate. His steps, to borrow the fine image used on a similar occasion by a Roman poet, are on the thin crust of ashes, beneath which the lava is still glowing. The seventeenth century has, in that unhappy country, left to the nineteenth a fatal heritage of malignant passions. No amnesty for the mutual wrongs inflicted by the Saxon defenders of Londonderry, and by the Celtic defenders of Limerick, has ever been granted from the heart by either race. To this day a more than

* Fountainhall, Sept. 16.; Wodrow, III. x. 3.

Digitized by Google

Spartan haughtiness alloys the many noble qualities which characterise the children of the victors, while a Helot feeling, compounded of awe and hatred, is but too often discernible in the children of the vanquished. Neither of the hostile castes can justly be absolved from blame; but the chief blame is due to that shortsighted and headstrong prince who, placed in a situation in which he might have reconciled them, employed all his power to inflame their animosity, and at length forced them to close in a grapple for life and death.

State of the law on the subject of religion.

The grievances under which the members of his Church laboured in Ireland differed widely from those which he was attempting to remove in England and Scotland. The Irish Statute Book, afterwards polluted by intolerance as barbarous as that of the dark ages, then contained scarcely a single enactment, and not a single stringent enactment, imposing any penalty on Papists as such. On our side of Saint George's Channel every priest who received a neophyte into the bosom of the Church of Rome was liable to be hanged, drawn, and quartered. On the other side he incurred no such danger. A Jesuit who landed at Dover took his life in his hand; but he walked the streets of Dublin in security. Here no man could hold office, or even earn his livelihood as a barrister or a schoolmaster, without previously taking the oath of supremacy: but in Ireland a public functionary was not held to be under the necessity of taking that oath unless it were formally tendered to him.* It there-

* The provisions of the Irish Act of Supremacy, 2 Eliz. chap. 1., are substantially the same with those of the English Act of Supremacy, 1 Eliz. chap. 1.: but the English act was soon found to be defective; and the defect was supplied by a more stringent act, 5 Eliz. chap. 1. No such supplementary law was made in Ireland. That the construction mentioned in the text was put on the Irish Act of Supremacy, we are told by Archbishop King: State of Ireland, chap. ii. sec. 9. He calls this construction Jesuitical: but I cannot see it in that light.

Digitized by Google

fore did not exclude from employment any person whom the government wished to promote. The sacramental test and the declaration against transubstantiation were unknown; nor was either House of Parliament closed by law against any religious sect.

Hostility of races.

It might seem, therefore, that the Irish Roman Catholic was in a situation which his English and Scottish brethren in the faith might well envy. In fact, however, his condition was more pitiable and irritating than theirs. For, though not persecuted as a Roman Catholic, he was oppressed as an Irishman. In his country the same line of demarcation which separated religions separated races; and he was of the conquered, the subjugated, the degraded race. On the same soil dwelt two populations, locally intermixed, morally and politically sundered. The difference of religion was by no means the only difference, or even the chief difference, which existed between them. They sprang from different stocks. They spoke different languages. They had different national characters as strongly opposed as any two national characters in Europe. They were in widely different stages of civilisation. Between two such populations there could be little sympathy; and centuries of calamities and wrongs had generated a strong antipathy. The relation in which the minority stood to the majority resembled the relation in which the followers of William the Conqueror stood to the Saxon churls, or the relation in which the followers of Cortes stood to the Indians of Mexico.

The appellation of Irish was then given exclusively to the Celts and to those families which, though not of Celtic origin, had in the course of ages degenerated into Celtic manners. These people, probably about a million in number, had, with few exceptions, adhered to the Church of Rome. Among them resided

Digitized by Google

about two hundred thousand colonists, proud of their Saxon blood and of their Protestant faith.*

The great preponderance of numbers on one side was more than compensated by a great superiority of intelligence, vigour, and organisation on the other. The English settlers seem to have been, in knowledge, energy, and perseverance, rather above than below the average level of the population of the mother country. The aboriginal peasantry, on the contrary, were in an almost savage state. They never worked till they felt the sting of hunger. They were content with accommodation inferior to that which, in happier countries, was provided for domestic cattle. Already the potato, a root which can be cultivated with scarcely any art, industry, or capital, and which cannot be long stored, had become the food of the common people.† From a people so fed diligence and forethought were not to be expected. Even within a few miles of Dublin, the traveller, on a soil the richest and most verdant in the world, saw with disgust the miserable burrows out of which squalid and half naked barbarians stared wildly at him as he passed.‡

Aboriginal peasantry.

The aboriginal aristocracy retained in no common measure the pride of birth, but had lost the influence which is derived from wealth and power. Their lands had been divided by Cromwell among his followers. A portion, indeed, of the vast territory which he had confiscated had, after the restoration of the House of Stuart, been given back to the ancient proprietors. But much the greater part was still held by English emigrants under the guarantee of an Act of Parliament. This act had been in force a quarter of a century; and under it

Aboriginal aristocracy.

* Political Anatomy of Ireland.

† Political Anatomy of Ireland, 1672; Irish Hudibras, 1689; John Dunton's Account of Ireland, 1699.

‡ Clarendon to Rochester, May 4. 1686.

Digitized by Google

mortgages, settlements, sales, and leases without number had been made. The old Irish gentry were scattered over the whole world. Descendants of Milesian chieftains swarmed in all the courts and camps of the Continent. Those despoiled proprietors who still remained in their native land, brooded gloomily over their losses, pined for the opulence and dignity of which they had been deprived, and cherished wild hopes of another revolution. A person of this class was described by his countrymen as a gentleman who would be rich if justice were done, as a gentleman who had a fine estate if he could only get it.* He seldom betook himself to any peaceful calling. Trade, indeed, he thought a far more disgraceful resource than marauding. Sometimes he turned freebooter. Sometimes he contrived, in defiance of the law, to live by coshering, that is to say, by quartering himself on the old tenants of his family, who, wretched as was their own condition, could not refuse a portion of their pittance to one whom they still regarded as their rightful lord.† The native gentleman who had been so fortunate as to keep or to regain some of his land too often lived like the petty prince of a savage tribe, and indemnified himself for the humiliations which the dominant race made him suffer by governing his vassals despotically, by keeping a rude harem, and by maddening or stupefying himself daily with strong drink.‡ Politically he was insignificant. No statute, indeed, excluded him from the House of Commons; but he had almost as little chance of obtaining a seat there as a man of colour has of being chosen a Senator of the United States. In fact only

* Bishop Malony's Letter to Bishop Tyrrel, March 8. 1689.

† Statute 10 & 11 Charles I. chap. 16.; King's State of the Protestants of Ireland, chap. ii. sec. 8.

‡ King, chap. ii. sec. 8. Miss Edgeworth's King Corny belongs to a later and much more civilised generation; but whoever has studied that admirable portrait can form some notion of what King Corny's greatgrandfather must have been.

Digitized by Google

one Papist had been returned to the Irish Parliament since the Restoration. The whole legislative and executive power was in the hands of the colonists; and the ascendency of the ruling caste was upheld by a standing army of seven thousand men, on whose zeal for what was called the English interest full reliance could be placed.*

On a close scrutiny it would have been found that neither the Irishry nor the Englishry formed a perfectly homogeneous body. The distinction between those Irish who were of Celtic blood, and those Irish who sprang from the followers of Strongbow and De Burgh, was not altogether effaced. The Fitzes sometimes permitted themselves to speak with scorn of the Os and Macs; and the Os and Macs sometimes repaid that scorn with aversion. In the preceding generation one of the most powerful of the O'Neills refused to pay any mark of respect to a Roman Catholic gentleman of old Norman descent. "They say that the family has been here four hundred years. No matter. I hate the clown as if he had come yesterday." † It seems, however, that such feelings were rare, and that the feud which had long raged between the aboriginal Celts and the degenerate English had nearly given place to the fiercer feud which separated both races from the modern and Protestant colony.

That colony had its own internal disputes, both national and religious. The majority was English; but a large minority came from the south of Scotland. One half of the settlers belonged to the Established Church: the other half were Dissenters. But in Ireland Scot and Southron were strongly bound together by their common Saxon origin. Churchman and Presbyterian were strongly

State of the English colony.

* King, chap. iii. sec. 2.

† Sheridan MS.; Preface to the first volume of the Hibernia Anglicana, 1690; Secret Consults of the Romish party in Ireland, 1689.

Digitized by Google

bound together by their common Protestantism. All the colonists had a common language and a common pecuniary interest. They were surrounded by common enemies, and could be safe only by means of common precautions and exertions. The few penal laws, therefore, which had been made in Ireland against Protestant Nonconformists, were a dead letter.* The bigotry of the most sturdy churchman would not bear exportation across Saint George's Channel. As soon as the Cavalier arrived in Ireland, and found that, without the hearty and courageous assistance of his Puritan neighbours, he and all his family would run imminent risk of being murdered by Popish marauders, his hatred of Puritanism, in spite of himself, began to languish and die away. It was remarked by eminent men of both parties that a Protestant who, in Ireland, was called a high Tory would in England have been considered as a moderate Whig.†

The Protestant Nonconformists, on their side, endured, with more patience than could have been expected, the sight of the most absurd ecclesiastical establishment that the world has ever seen. Four Archbishops and eighteen Bishops were employed in looking after about a fifth part of the number of churchmen who inhabited the single diocese of London. Of the parochial clergy a large proportion were pluralists, and resided at a distance from their cures.

* "There was a free liberty of conscience by connivance, though not by the law."—King, chap. iii. sec. 1.

† In a letter to James found among Bishop Tyrrel's papers, and dated Aug. 14. 1686, are some remarkable expressions. "There are few or none Protestants in that country but such as are joined with the Whigs against the common enemy." And again: "Those that passed for Tories here" (that is in England) "publicly espouse the Whig quarrel on the other side the water." Swift said the same thing to King William a few years later: "I remember when I was last in England I told the King that the highest Tories we had with us would make tolerable Whigs there."—Letter concerning the Sacramental Test.

Digitized by Google

There were some who drew from their benefices incomes of little less than a thousand pounds a year, without ever performing any spiritual function. Yet this monstrous institution was much less disliked by the Puritans settled in Ireland than the Church of England by the English sectaries. For in Ireland religious divisions were subordinate to national divisions; and the Presbyterian, while, as a theologian, he could not but condemn the established hierarchy, yet looked on that hierarchy with a sort of complacency when he considered it as a sumptuous and ostentatious trophy of the victory achieved by the great race from which he sprang.*

Thus the grievances of the Irish Roman Catholic had hardly anything in common with the grievances of the English Roman Catholic. The Roman Catholic of Lancashire or Staffordshire had only to turn Protestant; and he was at once, in all respects, on a level with his neighbours: but, if the Roman Catholics of Munster and Connaught had turned Protestants, they would still have continued to be a subject people. Whatever evils the Roman Catholic suffered in England were the effects of harsh legislation, and might have been remedied by a more liberal legislation. But between the two populations which inhabited Ireland there was an inequality which legislation had not caused and could not remove. The dominion which one of those populations exercised over the other was the dominion of wealth over poverty, of knowledge over ignorance, of civilised over uncivilised man.

James himself seemed, at the commencement of his reign, to be perfectly aware of these truths. The distractions of Ireland, he said, arose, not from the differences between the Ca-

Course which James ought to have followed.

* The wealth and negligence of the established clergy of Ireland are mentioned in the strongest terms by the Lord Lieutenant Clarendon, a most unexceptionable witness.

Digitized by Google

tholics and the Protestants, but from the differences between the Irish and the English.* The consequences which he should have drawn from this just proposition were sufficiently obvious; but, unhappily for himself and for Ireland, he failed to perceive them.

If only national animosity could be allayed, there could be little doubt that religious animosity, not being kept alive, as in England, by cruel penal acts and stringent test acts, would of itself fade away. To allay a national animosity such as that which the two races inhabiting Ireland felt for each other could not be the work of a few years. Yet it was a work to which a wise and good prince might have contributed much; and James would have undertaken that work with advantages such as none of his predecessors or successors possessed. At once an Englishman and a Roman Catholic, he belonged half to the ruling and half to the subject caste, and was therefore peculiarly qualified to be a mediator between them. Nor is it difficult to trace the course which he ought to have pursued. He ought to have determined that the existing settlement of landed property should be inviolable; and he ought to have announced that determination in such a manner as effectually to quiet the anxiety of the new proprietors, and to extinguish any wild hopes which the old proprietors might entertain. Whether, in the great transfer of estates, injustice had or had not been committed, was immaterial. That transfer, just or unjust, had taken place so long ago, that to reverse it would be to unfix the foundations of society. There must be a time of limitation to all rights. After thirty five years of actual possession, after twenty five years of possession solemnly guaranteed by statute, after innumerable leases and releases, mort-

* Clarendon reminds the King of this in a letter dated March 14. 168⅞. "It certainly is," Clarendon adds, "a most true notion."

Digitized by Google

gages and devises, it was too late to search for flaws in titles. Nevertheless something might have been done to heal the lacerated feelings and to raise the fallen fortunes of the Irish gentry. The colonists were in a thriving condition. They had greatly improved their property by building, planting, and enclosing. The rents had almost doubled within a few years; trade was brisk; and the revenue, amounting to about three hundred thousand pounds a year, more than defrayed all the charges of the local government, and afforded a surplus which was remitted to England. There was no doubt that the next Parliament which should meet at Dublin, though representing almost exclusively the English interest, would, in return for the King's promise to maintain that interest in all its legal rights, willingly grant to him a very considerable sum for the purpose of indemnifying, at least in part, such native families as had been wrongfully despoiled. It was thus that in our own time the French government put an end to the disputes engendered by the most extensive confiscation that ever took place in Europe. And thus, if James had been guided by the advice of his most loyal Protestant counsellors, he would have at least greatly mitigated one of the chief evils which afflicted Ireland.*

Having done this, he should have laboured to reconcile the hostile races to each other by impartially defending the rights and restraining the excesses of both. He should have punished with equal severity the native who indulged in the license of barbarism, and the colonist who abused the strength of civilisation. As far as the legitimate authority of the crown extended,—and in Ireland it extended far,—no man who was qualified for office

* Clarendon strongly recommended this course, and was of opinion that the Irish Parliament would do its part. See his letter to Ormond, Aug. 28. 1686.

Digitized by Google

by integrity and ability should have been considered as disqualified by extraction or by creed for any public trust. It is probable that a Roman Catholic King, with an ample revenue absolutely at his disposal, would, without much difficulty, have secured the cooperation of the Roman Catholic prelates and priests in the great work of reconciliation. Much, however, must still have been left to the healing influence of time. The native race would still have had to learn from the colonists industry and forethought, the arts of civilised life, and the language of England. There could not be equality between men who lived in houses and men who lived in sties, between men who were fed on bread and men who were fed on potatoes, between men who spoke the noble tongue of great philosophers and poets, and men who, with a perverted pride, boasted that they could not writhe their mouths into chattering such a jargon as that in which the Advancement of Learning and the Paradise Lost were written.* Yet it is not unreasonable to believe that, if the gentle policy which has been described had been steadily followed by the government, all distinctions would gradually have been effaced, and that there would now have been no more trace of the hostility which has been the curse of Ireland than there is of the equally deadly hostility which once raged between the Saxons and the Normans in England.

His errors.

Unhappily James, instead of becoming a mediator, became the fiercest and most reckless of partisans. Instead of allaying the animosity of the two populations, he inflamed it to a height before unknown. He determined to reverse their relative position, and to put the Protestant colonists under the feet of the Popish Celts. To be

* It was an O'Neil of great eminence who said that it did not become him to writhe his mouth to chatter English. Preface to the first volume of the Hibernia Anglicana.

Digitized by Google

of the established religion, to be of the English blood, was, in his view, a disqualification for civil and military employment. He meditated the design of again confiscating and again portioning out the soil of half the island, and showed his inclination so clearly that one class was soon agitated by terrors which he afterwards vainly wished to sooth, and the other by cupidity which he afterwards vainly wished to restrain. But this was the smallest part of his guilt and madness. He deliberately resolved, not merely to give to the aboriginal inhabitants of Ireland the entire dominion of their own country, but also to use them as his instruments for setting up arbitrary government in England. The event was such as might have been foreseen. The colonists turned to bay with the stubborn hardihood of their race. The mother country justly regarded their cause as her own. Then came a desperate struggle for a tremendous stake. Everything dear to nations was wagered on both sides: nor can we justly blame either the Irishman or the Englishman for obeying, in that extremity, the law of selfpreservation. The contest was terrible, but short. The weaker went down. His fate was cruel; and yet for the cruelty with which he was treated there was, not indeed a defence, but an excuse: for, though he suffered all that tyranny could inflict, he suffered nothing that he would not himself have inflicted. The effect of the insane attempt to subjugate England by means of Ireland was that the Irish became hewers of wood and drawers of water to the English. The old proprietors, by their effort to recover what they had lost, lost the greater part of what they had retained. The momentary ascendency of Popery produced such a series of barbarous laws against Popery as made the statute book of Ireland a proverb of infamy throughout Christendom. Such were the bitter fruits of the policy of James.

We have seen that one of his first acts, after he

Digitized by Google

became King, was to recall Ormond from Ireland. Ormond was the head of the English interest in that kingdom: he was firmly attached to the Protestant religion; and his power far exceeded that of an ordinary Lord Lieutenant, first, because he was in rank and wealth the greatest of the colonists, and, secondly, because he was not only the chief of the civil administration, but also commander of the forces. The King was not at that time disposed to commit the government wholly to Irish hands. He had indeed been heard to say that a native viceroy would soon become an independent sovereign.* For the present, therefore, he determined to divide the power which Ormond had possessed, to entrust the civil administration to an English and Protestant Lord Lieutenant, and to give the command of the army to an Irish and Roman Catholic General. The Lord Lieutenant was Clarendon: the General was Tyrconnel.

Tyrconnel sprang, as has already been said, from one of those degenerate families of the Pale which were popularly classed with the aboriginal population of Ireland. He sometimes, indeed, in his rants, talked with Norman haughtiness of the Celtic barbarians †: but all his sympathies were really with the natives. The Protestant colonists he hated; and they returned his hatred. Clarendon's inclinations were very different: but he was, from temper, interest, and principle, an obsequious courtier. His spirit was mean: his circumstances were embarrassed; and his mind had been deeply imbued with the political doctrines which the Church of England had in that age

* Sheridan MS. among the Stuart Papers. I ought to acknowledge the courtesy with which Mr. Glover assisted me in my search for this valuable manuscript. James appears, from the instructions which he drew up for his son in 1692, to have retained to the last the notion that Ireland could not without danger be entrusted to an Irish Lord Lieutenant.

† Sheridan MS.

Digitized by Google

too assiduously taught. His abilities, however, were not contemptible; and, under a good King, he would probably have been a respectable viceroy.

About three quarters of a year elapsed between the recall of Ormond and the arrival of Clarendon at Dublin. During that interval the King was represented by a board of Lords Justices: but the military administration was in Tyrconnel's hands. Already the designs of the court began gradually to unfold themselves. A royal order came from Whitehall for disarming the population. This order Tyrconnel strictly executed as respected the English. Though the country was infested by predatory bands, a Protestant gentleman could scarcely obtain permission to keep a brace of pistols. The native peasantry, on the other hand, were suffered to retain their weapons.* The joy of the colonists was therefore great, when at length, in December 1685, Tyrconnel went to London, and Clarendon came to Dublin. But it soon appeared that the government was really directed, not at Dublin, but in London. Every mail that crossed Saint George's Channel brought tidings of the boundless influence which Tyrconnel exercised on Irish affairs. It was said that he was to be a Marquess, that he was to be a Duke, that he was to have the sole command of the forces, that he was to be entrusted with the task of remodelling the army and the courts of justice.† Clarendon was bitterly mortified at finding himself a subordinate member of that administration of which he had expected to be the head. He complained that whatever he did was misrepresented by his detractors, and that the gravest resolutions touching the country which he governed were adopted at Westminster, made known to the public, discussed at

Clarendon arrives in Ireland as Lord Lieutenant.

His mortifications.

* Clarendon to Rochester, Jan. 19. 168⅞; Secret Consults of the Romish Party in Ireland, 1690.

† Clarendon to Rochester, February 27. 168⅞.

Digitized by Google

coffee houses, communicated in hundreds of private letters, some weeks before one hint had been given to the Lord Lieutenant. His own personal dignity, he said, mattered little: but it was no light thing that the representative of the majesty of the throne should be made an object of contempt to the people.* Panic spread fast among the English, when they found that the viceroy, their fellow countryman and fellow Protestant, was unable to extend to them the protection which they had expected from him. They began to know by bitter experience what it is to be a subject caste. They were harassed by the natives with accusations of treason and sedition. This Protestant had corresponded with Monmouth: that Protestant had said something disrespectful of the King four or five years ago, when the Exclusion Bill was under discussion; and the evidence of the most infamous of mankind was ready to substantiate every charge. The Lord Lieutenant expressed his apprehension that, if these practices were not stopped, there would soon be at Dublin a reign of terror similar to that which he had seen in London, when every man held his life and honour at the mercy of Oates and Bedloe.†

Panic among the colonists.

Clarendon was soon informed, by a concise despatch from Sunderland, that it had been resolved to make without delay a complete change in both the civil and the military government of Ireland, and to bring a large number of Roman Catholics instantly into office. His Majesty, it was most ungraciously added, had taken counsel on these matters with persons more competent to advise him than his inexperienced Lord Lieutenant could possibly be.‡

Before this letter reached the viceroy the intel-

* Clarendon to Rochester and Sunderland, March 2. 168⅞; and to Rochester, March 14

† Clarendon to Sunderland, February 26. 168⅞.

‡ Sunderland to Clarendon, March 11. 168⅞.

Digitized by Google

ligence which it contained had, through many channels, arrived in Ireland. The terror of the colonists was extreme. Outnumbered as they were by the native population, their condition would be pitiable indeed if the native population were to be armed against them with the whole power of the state; and nothing less than this was threatened. The English inhabitants of Dublin passed each other in the streets with dejected looks. On the Exchange business was suspended. Landowners hastened to sell their estates for whatever could be got, and to remit the purchase money to England. Traders began to call in their debts, and to make preparations for retiring from business. The alarm soon affected the revenue.* Clarendon attempted to inspire the dismayed settlers with a confidence which he was himself far from feeling. He assured them that their property would be held sacred, and that, to his certain knowledge, the King was fully determined to maintain the Act of Settlement which guaranteed their right to the soil. But his letters to England were in a very different strain. He ventured even to expostulate with the King, and, without blaming His Majesty's intention of employing Roman Catholics, expressed a strong opinion that the Roman Catholics who might be employed ought to be Englishmen.†

The reply of James was dry and cold. He declared that he had no intention of depriving the English colonists of their land, but that he regarded a large portion of them as his enemies, and that, since he consented to leave so much property in the hands of his enemies, it was the more necessary that the civil and military administration should be in the hands of his friends.‡

Accordingly several Roman Catholics were sworn

* Clarendon to Rochester, March 14. 168⅝.

† Clarendon to James, March 4. 168⅝.

‡ James to Clarendon, April 6. 1686.

Digitized by Google

of the Privy Council; and orders were sent to corporations to admit Roman Catholics to municipal advantages.* Many officers of the army were arbitrarily deprived of their commissions and of their bread. It was to no purpose that the Lord Lieutenant pleaded the cause of some whom he knew to be good soldiers and loyal subjects. Among them were old Cavaliers, who had fought bravely for monarchy, and who bore the marks of honourable wounds. Their places were supplied by men who had no recommendation but their religion. Of the new Captains and Lieutenants, it was said, some had been cowherds, some footmen, some noted marauders; some had been so used to wear brogues that they stumbled and shuffled about strangely in their military jack boots. Not a few of the officers who were discarded took refuge in the Dutch service, and enjoyed, four years later, the pleasure of driving their successors before them in ignominious rout from the margin of the Boyne. †

The distress and alarm of Clarendon were increased by news which reached him through private channels. Without his approbation, without his knowledge, preparations were making for arming and drilling the whole Celtic population of the country of which he was the nominal governor. Tyrconnel from London directed the design; and the prelates of the Roman Catholic Church were his agents. Every priest had been instructed to prepare an exact list of all his male parishioners capable of bearing arms, and to forward it to his Bishop.‡

It had already been rumoured that Tyrconnel

* Sunderland to Clarendon, May 22 1686; Clarendon to Ormond, May 30.; Clarendon to Sunderland, July 6. 11.

† Clarendon to Rochester and Sunderland, June 1. 1686; to Rochester, June 12.; King's State of the Protestants of Ireland, chap. ii. sec. 6, 7.; Apology for the Protestants of Ireland, 1689.

‡ Clarendon to Rochester, May 15. 1686.

Digitized by Google

would soon return to Dublin armed with extraordinary and independent powers; and the rumour gathered strength daily. The Lord Lieutenant, whom no insult could drive to resign the pomp and emoluments of his place, declared that he should submit cheerfully to the royal pleasure, and approve himself in all things a faithful and obedient subject. He had never, he said, in his life, had any difference with Tyrconnel, and he trusted that no difference would now arise.* Clarendon appears not to have recollected that there had once been a plot to ruin the fame of his innocent sister, and that in that plot Tyrconnel had borne a chief part. This is not exactly one of the injuries which highspirited men most readily pardon. But, in the wicked court where the Hydes had long been pushing their fortunes, such injuries were easily forgiven and forgotten, not from magnanimity or Christian charity, but from mere baseness and want of moral sensibility.

Arrival of Tyrconnel at Dublin as General.

In June 1686, Tyrconnel came. His commission authorised him only to command the troops: but he brought with him royal instructions touching all parts of the administration, and at once took the real government of the island into his own hands. On the day after his arrival he explicitly said that commissions must be largely given to Roman Catholic officers and that room must be made for them by dismissing more Protestants. He pushed on the remodelling of the army eagerly and indefatigably. It was indeed the only part of the functions of a Commander in Chief which he was competent to perform; for, though courageous in brawls and duels, he knew nothing of military duty. At the very first review which he held, it was evident to all who were near him that he did not know how to draw up a regiment.† To

* Clarendon to Rochester, May 11. 1686.

† Ibid. June 8. 1686.

Digitized by Google

turn Englishmen out and to put Irishmen in was, in his view, the beginning and the end of the administration of war. He had the insolence to cashier the Captain of the Lord Lieutenant's own Body Guard; nor was Clarendon aware of what had happened till he saw a Roman Catholic, whose face was quite unknown to him, escorting the state coach.* The change was not confined to the officers alone. The ranks were completely broken up and recomposed. Four or five hundred soldiers were turned out of a single regiment chiefly on the ground that they were below the proper stature. Yet the most unpractised eye at once perceived that they were taller and better made men than their successors, whose wild and squalid appearance disgusted the beholders.† Orders were given to the new officers that no man of the Protestant religion was to be suffered to enlist. The recruiting parties, instead of beating their drums for volunteers at fairs and markets, as had been the old practice, repaired to places to which the Roman Catholics were in the habit of making pilgrimages for purposes of devotion. In a few weeks the General had introduced more than two thousand natives into the ranks; and the people about him confidently affirmed that by Christmas day not a man of English race would be left in the whole army.‡

His partiality and violence.

On all questions which arose in the Privy Council, Tyrconnel showed similar violence and partiality. John Keating, Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, a man distinguished by ability, integrity, and loyalty, represented with great mildness that perfect equality was all that the General could reasonably ask for

* Secret Consults of the Romish Party in Ireland.

† Clarendon to Rochester, June 26. and July 4. 1686; Apology for the Protestants of Ireland, 1689.

‡ Clarendon to Rochester, July 4. 22. 1686; to Sunderland, July 6.; to the King, August 14.

Digitized by Google

his own Church. The King, he said, evidently meant that no man fit for public trust should be excluded because he was a Roman Catholic, and that no man unfit for public trust should be admitted because he was a Protestant. Tyrconnel immediately began to curse and swear. "I do not know what to say to that; I would have all Catholics in."* The most judicious Irishmen of his own religious persuasion were dismayed at his rashness, and ventured to remonstrate with him; but he drove them from him with imprecations.† His brutality was such that many thought him mad. Yet it was less strange than the shameless volubility with which he uttered falsehoods. He had long before earned the nickname of Lying Dick Talbot; and, at Whitehall, any wild fiction was commonly designated as one of Dick Talbot's truths. He now daily proved that he was well entitled to this unenviable reputation. Indeed in him mendacity was almost a disease. He would, after giving orders for the dismission of English officers, take them into his closet, assure them of his confidence and friendship, and implore Heaven to confound him, sink him, blast him, if he did not take good care of their interests. Sometimes those to whom he had thus perjured himself learned, before the day closed, that he had cashiered them.‡

On his arrival, though he swore savagely at the Act of Settlement, and called the English interest a foul thing, a roguish thing, and a damned thing, he yet pretended to be convinced that the distribution of property could not, after the lapse of so many years, be altered.§ But when he had been a few

* Clarendon to Rochester, June 19. 1686.

† Ibid. June 22. 1686.

‡ Sheridan MS.; King's State of the Protestants of Ireland, chap. iii. sec. 3. sec. 8 There is a most striking instance of Tyrconnel's impudent mendacity in Clarendon's Letter to Rochester, July 22. 1686.

§ Clarendon to Rochester, June 8. 1686.

Digitized by Google

weeks at Dublin, his language changed. He began to harangue vehemently at the Council board on the necessity of giving back the land to the old owners. He had not, however, as yet obtained his master's sanction to this fatal project. National feeling still struggled feebly against superstition in the mind of James. He was an Englishman: he was an English King; and he could not, without some misgivings, consent to the destruction of the greatest colony that England had ever planted. The English Roman Catholics with whom he was in the habit of taking counsel were almost unanimous in favour of the Act of Settlement. Not only the honest and moderate Powis, but the dissolute and headstrong Dover, gave judicious and patriotic advice. Tyrconnel could hardly hope to counteract at a distance the effect which such advice must produce on the royal mind. He determined to plead the cause of his caste in person; and accordingly he set out, at the end of August, for England.

He is bent on the repeal of the Act of Settlement.

He returns to England.

His presence and his absence were equally dreaded by the Lord Lieutenant. It was, indeed, painful to be daily browbeaten by an enemy: but it was not less painful to know that an enemy was daily breathing calumny and evil counsel in the royal ear. Clarendon was overwhelmed by manifold vexations. He made a progress through the country, and found that he was everywhere treated by the Irish population with contempt. The Roman Catholic priests exhorted their congregations to withhold from him all marks of honour. The native gentry, instead of coming to pay their respects to him, remained at their houses. The native peasantry everywhere sang Celtic ballads in praise of Tyrconnel, who would, they doubted not, soon reappear to complete the humiliation of their oppressors.* The viceroy had scarcely returned to

* Clarendon to Rochester Sept. 23. and October 2. 1686; Secret Consults of the Romish Party in Ireland, 1690.

Digitized by Google

Dublin, from his unsatisfactory tour, when he received letters which informed him that he had incurred the King's serious displeasure. His Majesty,—so these letters ran,—expected his servants not only to do what he commanded, but to do it from the heart, and with a cheerful countenance. The Lord Lieutenant had not, indeed, refused to cooperate in the reform of the army and of the civil administration: but his cooperation had been reluctant and perfunctory: his looks had betrayed his feelings; and everybody saw that he disapproved of the policy which he was employed to carry into effect.* In great anguish of mind he wrote to defend himself; but he was sternly told that his defence was not satisfactory. He then, in the most abject terms, declared that he would not attempt to justify himself; that he acquiesced in the royal judgment, be it what it might; that he prostrated himself in the dust; that he implored pardon; that of all penitents he was the most sincere; that he should think it glorious to die in his Sovereign's cause, but found it impossible to live under his Sovereign's displeasure. Nor was this mere interested hypocrisy, but, at least in part, unaffected slavishness and poverty of spirit; for in confidential letters, not meant for the royal eye, he bemoaned himself to his family in the same strain. He was miserable: he was crushed: the wrath of the King was insupportable: if that wrath could not be mitigated, life would not be worth having.† The poor man's terror increased when he learned that it had been determined at Whitehall to recall him, and to appoint, as his successor, his rival and calumniator, Tyrconnel.‡ Then for a time the prospect seemed to clear: the King was in better humour; and during a few days Clarendon

The King displeased with Clarendon.

* Clarendon to Rochester, October 6. 1686.

† Clarendon to the King and to Rochester, October 23. 1686.

‡ Clarendon to Rochester, October 29, 30. 1686.

Digitized by Google

flattered himself that his brother's intercession had prevailed, and that the crisis was passed.*

Rochester attacked by the Jesuitical cabal.

In truth the crisis was only beginning. While Clarendon was trying to lean on Rochester, Rochester was unable longer to support himself. As in Ireland the elder brother, though retaining the guard of honour, the sword of state, and the title of Excellency, had really been superseded by the Commander of the Forces, so in England, the younger brother, though holding the white staff, and walking, by virtue of his high office, before the greatest hereditary nobles, was fast sinking into a mere financial clerk. The Parliament was again prorogued to a distant day, in opposition to the Treasurer's known wishes. He was not even told that there was to be another prorogation, but was left to learn the news from the Gazette. The real direction of affairs had passed to the cabal which dined with Sunderland on Fridays. The cabinet met only to hear the despatches from foreign courts read; nor did those despatches contain anything which was not known on the Royal Exchange; for all the English Envoys had received orders to put into the official letters only the common talk of antechambers, and to reserve important secrets for private communications which were addressed to James himself, to Sunderland, or to Petre.† Yet the victorious faction was not content. The King was assured by those whom he most trusted that the obstinacy with which the nation opposed his designs was really to be imputed to Rochester. How could the people believe that their Sovereign was unalterably resolved to persevere in the course on which he had entered, when they saw at his right hand, ostensibly first in power and trust among his counsellors, a man who notoriously regarded that course with strong disapproba-

* Clarendon to Rochester, November 27. 1686

† Barillon, Sept. $\frac{13}{23}$. 1686; Life of James the Second, ii. 99.

Digitized by Google

tion? Every step which had been taken with the object of humbling the Church of England and of elevating the Church of Rome, had been opposed by the Treasurer. True it was that, when he had found opposition vain, he had gloomily submitted, nay, that he had sometimes even assisted in carrying into effect the very plans against which he had most earnestly contended. True it was that, though he disliked the Ecclesiastical Commission, he had consented to be a Commissioner. True it was that he had, while declaring that he could see nothing blamable in the conduct of the Bishop of London, voted sullenly and reluctantly for the sentence of suspension. But this was not enough. A prince, engaged in an enterprise so important and arduous as that on which James was bent, had a right to expect from his first minister, not unwilling and ungracious acquiescence, but zealous and strenuous cooperation. While such advice was daily given to James by those in whom he reposed confidence, he received, by the penny post, many anonymous letters filled with calumnies against the Lord Treasurer. This mode of attack had been contrived by Tyrconnel, and was in perfect harmony with every part of his infamous life.*

The King hesitated. He seems, indeed, to have really regarded his brother in law with personal kindness, the effect of near affinity, of long and familiar intercourse, and of many mutual good offices. It seemed probable that, as long as Rochester continued to submit himself, though tardily and with murmurs, to the royal pleasure, he would continue to be in name prime minister. Sunderland, therefore, with exquisite cunning, suggested to his master the propriety of asking the only proof of obedience which it was quite certain that Rochester never would give. At present,—such was the language of the artful Secretary,—it was impossible to consult with the first

* Sheridan MS.

Digitized by Google

of the King's servants respecting the object nearest to the King's heart. It was lamentable to think that religious prejudices should, at such a conjuncture, deprive the government of such valuable assistance. Perhaps those prejudices might not prove insurmountable. Then the deceiver whispered that, to his knowledge, Rochester had of late had some misgivings about the points in dispute between the Protestants and Catholics.* This was enough. The King eagerly caught at the hint. He began to flatter himself that he might at once escape from the disagreeable necessity of removing a friend, and secure an able coadjutor for the great work which was in progress. He was also elated by the hope that he might have the merit and the glory of saving a fellow creature from perdition. He seems, indeed, about this time, to have been seized with an unusually violent fit of zeal for his religion; and this is the more remarkable, because he had just relapsed, after a short interval of selfrestraint, into debauchery which all Christian divines condemn as sinful, and which, in an elderly man married to an agreeable young wife, is regarded even by people of the world as disreputable. Lady Dorchester had returned from Dublin, and was again the King's mistress. Her return was politically of no importance. She had learned by experience the folly of attempting to save her lover from the destruction to which he was running headlong. She therefore suffered the Jesuits to guide his political conduct; and they, in return, suffered her to wheedle him out of money. She was, however, only one of several abandoned women who at this time shared, with his beloved Church, the dominion over his mind.† He seems to have determined to make some amends for neglecting the welfare of his own soul by taking care

Attempts of James to convert Rochester.

* Life of James the Second, ii. 100.

† Barillon. Sept. $\frac{13}{23}$. 1686; Bonrepaux, June 4. 1687.

Digitized by Google

of the souls of others. He set himself, therefore, to labour, with real good will, but with the good will of a coarse, stern, and arbitrary mind, for the conversion of his kinsman. Every audience which the Treasurer obtained was spent in arguments about the authority of the Church and the worship of images. Rochester was firmly resolved not to abjure his religion: but he had no scruple about employing in selfdefence artifices as discreditable as those which had been used against him. He affected to speak like a man whose mind was not made up, professed himself desirous to be enlightened if he was in error, borrowed Popish books, and listened with civility to Popish divines. He had several interviews with Leyburn, the Vicar Apostolic, with Godden, the chaplain and almoner of the Queen Dowager, and with Bonaventure Giffard, a theologian trained to polemics in the schools of Douay. It was agreed that there should be a formal disputation between these doctors and some Protestant clergymen. The King told Rochester to choose any ministers of the Established Church, with two exceptions. The proscribed persons were Tillotson and Stillingfleet. Tillotson, the most popular preacher of that age, and in manners the most inoffensive of men, had been much connected with some leading Whigs; and Stillingfleet, who was renowned as a consummate master of all the weapons of controversy, had given still deeper offence by publishing an answer to the papers which had been found in the strong box of Charles the Second. Rochester took the two royal chaplains who happened to be in waiting. One of them was Simon Patrick, whose commentaries on the Bible still form a part of theological libraries: the other was Jane, a vehement Tory, who had assisted in drawing up that decree by which the University of Oxford had solemnly adopted the worst follies of Filmer. The conference took place at Whitehall on the thirtieth of November.

Digitized by Google

Rochester, who did not wish it to be known that he had even consented to hear the arguments of Popish priests, stipulated for secrecy. No auditor was suffered to be present except the King. The subject discussed was the real presence. The Roman Catholic divines took on themselves the burden of the proof. Patrick and Jane said little; nor was it necessary that they should say much; for the Earl himself undertook to defend the doctrine of his Church, and, as was his habit, soon warmed with conflict, lost his temper, and asked with great vehemence whether it was expected that he should change his religion on such frivolous grounds. Then he remembered how much he was risking, began again to dissemble, complimented the disputants on their skill and learning, and asked time to consider what had been said.*

Slow as James was, he could not but see that this was mere trifling. He told Barillon that Rochester's language was not that of a man honestly desirous of arriving at the truth. Still the King did not like to propose directly to his brother in law the simple choice, apostasy or dismissal: but, three days after the conference, Barillon waited on the Treasurer, and, with much circumlocution and many expressions of friendly concern, broke the unpleasant truth. "Do you mean," said Rochester, bewildered by the involved and ceremonious phrases in which the intimation was made, "that, if I do not turn Catholic, the consequence will be that I shall lose my place?" "I say nothing about consequences," answered the wary diplomatist. "I only come as a friend to express a hope that you will take care to keep your place."

* Barillon, Dec $\frac{3}{13}$. 1686; Burnet, i. 684.; Life of James the Second, ii. 100.; Dodd's Church History. I have tried to frame a fair narrative out of these conflicting materials. It seems clear to me, from Rochester's own papers, that he was on this occasion by no means so stubborn as he has been represented by Burnet and by the biographer of James.

Digitized by Google

"But surely," said Rochester, "the plain meaning of all this is that I must turn Catholic or go out." He put many questions for the purpose of ascertaining whether the communication was made by authority, but could extort only vague and mysterious replies. At last, affecting a confidence which he was far from feeling, he declared that Barillon must have been imposed upon by idle or malicious reports. "I tell you," he said, "that the King will not dismiss me, and I will not resign. I know him: he knows me; and I fear nobody." The Frenchman answered that he was charmed, that he was ravished to hear it, and that his only motive for interfering was a sincere anxiety for the prosperity and dignity of his excellent friend the Treasurer. And thus the two statesmen parted, each flattering himself that he had duped the other.*

Meanwhile, in spite of all injunctions of secrecy, the news that the Lord Treasurer had consented to be instructed in the doctrines of Popery had spread fast through London. Patrick and Jane had been seen going in at that mysterious door which led to Chiffinch's apartments. Some Roman Catholics about the court had, indiscreetly or artfully, told all, and more than all, that they knew. The Tory churchmen waited anxiously for fuller information. They were mortified to think that their leader should even have pretended to waver in his opinion; but they could not believe that he would stoop to be a renegade. The unfortunate minister, tortured at once by his fierce passions and his low desires, annoyed by the censures of the public, annoyed by the hints which he had received from Barillon, afraid of losing character, afraid of losing office, repaired to the royal closet. He was determined to keep his place, if it could be kept by any villany but one. He would pre-

* From Rochester's Minutes, dated Dec. 3. 1686

Digitized by Google

tend to be shaken in his religious opinions, and to be half a convert: he would promise to give strenuous support to that policy which he had hitherto opposed: but, if he were driven to extremity, he would refuse to change his religion. He began, therefore, by telling the King that the business in which His Majesty took so much interest was not sleeping, that Jane and Giffard were engaged in consulting books on the points in dispute between the Churches, and that, when these researches were over, it would be desirable to have another conference. Then he complained bitterly that all the town was apprised of what ought to have been carefully concealed, and that some persons, who, from their station, might be supposed to be well informed, reported strange things as to the royal intentions. "It is whispered," he said, "that, if I do not do as Your Majesty would have me, I shall not be suffered to continue in my present station." The King said, with some general expressions of kindness, that it was difficult to prevent people from talking, and that loose reports were not to be regarded. These vague phrases were not likely to quiet the perturbed mind of the minister. His agitation became violent, and he began to plead for his place as if he had been pleading for his life. "Your Majesty sees that I do all in my power to obey you. Indeed I will do all that I can to obey you in everything. I will serve you in your own way. Nay," he cried, in an agony of baseness, "I will do what I can to believe as you would have me. But do not let me be told, while I am trying to bring my mind to this, that, if I find it impossible to comply, I must lose all. For I must needs tell Your Majesty that there are other considerations." "Oh, you must needs," exclaimed the King with an oath. For a single word of honest and manly sound, escaping in the midst of all this abject supplication, was sufficient to move his anger. "I hope, sir," said

Digitized by Google

poor Rochester, "that I do not offend you. Surely Your Majesty could not think well of me if I did not say so." The King recollected himself, protested that he was not offended, and advised the Treasurer to disregard idle rumours, and to confer again with Jane and Giffard.*

Dismission of Rochester.

After this conversation, a fortnight elapsed before the decisive blow fell. That fortnight Rochester passed in intriguing and imploring. He attempted to interest in his favour those Roman Catholics who had the greatest influence at court. He could not, he said, renounce his own religion: but, with that single reservation, he would do all that they could desire. Indeed, if he might only keep his place, they should find that he could be more useful to them as a Protestant than as one of their own communion.† His wife, who was on a sick bed, had already, it was said, solicited the honour of a visit from the much injured Queen, and had attempted to work on Her Majesty's feelings of compassion.‡ But the Hydes abased themselves in vain. Petre regarded them with peculiar malevolence, and was bent on their ruin.§ On the evening of the seventeenth of December the Earl was called into the royal closet. James was unusually discomposed, and even shed tears. The occasion, indeed, could not but call up some recollections which might well soften a hard heart. He expressed his regret that his duty made it impossible for him to indulge his private partialities. It was absolutely necessary, he said, that those who had the chief direction of his affairs should partake his opinions and feelings. He owned that he had very great personal obligations to Rochester, and that no fault could be found with the way in which the financial business had lately been done: but the

* From Rochester's Minutes, Dec. 4. 1686.

† Barillon, Dec. $\frac{20}{30}$. 1686.

‡ Burnet, i. 684.

§ Bonrepaux, $\frac{\text{May } 25.}{\text{June } 4.}$ 1687.

Digitized by Google

office of Lord Treasurer was of such high importance that, in general, it ought not to be entrusted to a single person, and could not safely be entrusted by a Roman Catholic King to a person zealous for the Church of England. "Think better of it, my Lord," he continued. "Read again the papers from my brother's box. I will give you a little more time for consideration, if you desire it." Rochester saw that all was over, and that the wisest course left to him was to make his retreat with as much money and as much credit as possible. He succeeded in both objects. He obtained a pension of four thousand pounds a year for two lives on the post office. He had made great sums out of the estates of traitors, and carried with him in particular Grey's bond for forty thousand pounds, and a grant of all the estate which the crown had in Grey's extensive property.* No person had ever quitted office on terms so advantageous. To the applause of the sincere friends of the Established Church Rochester had, indeed, very slender claims. To save his place he had sate in that tribunal which had been illegally created for the purpose of persecuting her. To save his place he had given a dishonest vote for degrading one of her most eminent ministers, had affected to doubt her orthodoxy, had listened with the outward show of docility to teachers who called her schismatical and heretical, and had offered to cooperate strenuously with her deadliest enemies in their designs against her. The highest praise to which he was entitled was this, that he had shrunk from the exceeding wickedness and baseness of publicly abjuring, for lucre, the religion in which he had been brought up, which he believed to be true, and of which he had long made an ostentatious profession. Yet he was extolled by the great

* Rochester's Minutes, Dec. 19. 1686; Barillon, $\frac{\text{Dec. 30.}}{\text{Jan. 9.}}$ 168$\frac{6}{7}$; Burnet, i. 685.; Life of James the Second, ii. 102.; Treasury Warrant Book, December 29 1686.

Digitized by Google

body of Churchmen as if he had been the bravest and purest of martyrs. The Old and New Testaments, the Martyrologies of Eusebius and of Fox, were ransacked to find parallels for his heroic piety. He was Daniel in the den of lions, Shadrach in the fiery furnace, Peter in the dungeon of Herod, Paul at the bar of Nero, Ignatius in the amphitheatre, Latimer at the stake. Among the many facts which prove that the standard of honour and virtue among the public men of that age was low, the admiration excited by Rochester's constancy is, perhaps, the most decisive.

In his fall he dragged down Clarendon. On the seventh of January 1687, the Gazette announced to the people of London that the Treasury was put into commission. On the eighth arrived at Dublin a despatch formally signifying that in a month Tyrconnel would assume the government of Ireland. It was not without great difficulty that this man had surmounted the numerous impediments which stood in the way of his ambition. It was well known that the extermination of the English colony in Ireland was the object on which his heart was set. He had, therefore, to overcome some scruples in the royal mind. He had to surmount the opposition, not merely of all the Protestant members of the government, not merely of the moderate and respectable heads of the Roman Catholic body, but even of several members of the Jesuitical cabal.* Sunderland shrank from the thought

Dismission of Clarendon.

Tyrconnel Lord Deputy.

* Bishop Malony in a letter to Bishop Tyrrel says, "Never a Catholic or other English will ever think or make a step, nor suffer the King to make a step for your restauration, but leave you as you were hitherto, and leave your enemies over your heads: nor is there any Englishman, Catholic or other, of what quality or degree soever alive, that will stick to sacrifice all Ireland for to save the least interest of his own in England, and would as willingly see all Ireland over inhabited by English of whatsoever religion as by the Irish."

Digitized by Google

of an Irish revolution, religious, political, and social. To the Queen Tyrconnel was personally an object of aversion. Powis was therefore suggested as the man best qualified for the viceroyalty. He was of illustrious birth: he was a sincere Roman Catholic; and yet he was generally allowed by candid Protestants to be an honest man and a good Englishman. All opposition, however, yielded to Tyrconnel's energy and cunning. He fawned, bullied, and bribed indefatigably. Petre's help was secured by flattery. Sunderland was plied at once with promises and menaces. An immense price was offered for his support, no less than an annuity of five thousand pounds a year from Ireland, redeemable by payment of fifty thousand pounds down. If this proposal were rejected, Tyrconnel threatened to let the King know that the Lord President had, at the Friday dinners, described His Majesty as a fool who must be governed either by a woman or by a priest. Sunderland, pale and trembling, offered to procure for Tyrconnel supreme military command, enormous appointments, anything but the viceroyalty: but all compromise was rejected; and it was necessary to yield. Mary of Modena herself was not free from suspicion of corruption. There was in London a renowned chain of pearls which was valued at ten thousand pounds. It had belonged to Prince Rupert; and by him it had been left to Margaret Hughes, a courtesan who, towards the close of his life, had exercised a boundless empire over him. Tyrconnel loudly boasted that with this chain he had purchased the support of the Queen. There were those, however, who suspected that this story was one of Dick Talbot's truths, and that it had no more foundation than the calumnies which, twenty six years before, he had invented to blacken the fame of Anne Hyde. To the Roman Catholic courtiers generally he spoke of the uncertain tenure by which they held offices, honours, and emoluments. The King might

Digitized by Google

die tomorrow, and might leave them at the mercy of a hostile government and a hostile rabble. But, if the old faith could be made dominant in Ireland, if the Protestant interest in that country could be destroyed, there would still be, in the worst event, an asylum at hand to which they might retreat, and where they might either negotiate or defend themselves with advantage. A Popish priest was hired with the promise of the mitre of Waterford to preach at Saint James's against the Act of Settlement; and his sermon, though heard with deep disgust by the English part of the auditory, was not without its effect. The struggle which patriotism had for a time maintained against bigotry in the royal mind was at an end. "There is work to be done in Ireland," said James, "which no Englishman will do." *

All obstacles were at length removed; and in February 1687, Tyrconnel began to rule his native country with the power and appointments of Lord Lieutenant, but with the humbler title of Lord Deputy.

Dismay of the English colonists in Ireland.

His arrival spread dismay through the whole English population. Clarendon was accompanied, or speedily followed, across Saint George's Channel, by a large proportion of the most respectable inhabitants of Dublin, gentlemen, tradesmen, and artificers. It was said that fifteen hundred families emigrated in a few days. The panic was not unreasonable. The work of putting the colonists down under the feet of the natives went rapidly on. In a short time almost every Privy Councillor, Judge, Sheriff, Mayor, Alderman, and Justice of the Peace was a Celt and a Roman Catholic. It seemed that things would soon be ripe for a general election, and that a House of Commons bent on abrogating the Act of Settlement would easily be

* The best account of these transactions is in the Sheridan MS.

Digitized by Google

assembled.* Those who had lately been the lords of the island now cried out, in the bitterness of their souls, that they had become a prey and a laughing-stock to their own serfs and menials; that houses were burnt and cattle stolen with impunity; that the new soldiers roamed the country, pillaging, insulting, ravishing, maiming, tossing one Protestant in a blanket, tying up another by the hair and scourging him; that to appeal to the law was vain; that Irish Judges, Sheriffs, juries, and witnesses were all in a league to save Irish criminals; and that, even without an Act of Parliament, the whole soil would soon change hands, for that, in every action of ejectment tried under the administration of Tyrconnel, judgment had been given for the native against the Englishman.†

While Clarendon was at Dublin the Privy Seal had been in the hands of Commissioners. His friends hoped that it would, on his return to London, be again delivered to him. But the King and the Jesuitical cabal had determined that the disgrace of the Hydes should be complete. Lord Arundell of Wardour, a Roman Catholic, obtained the Privy Seal. Bellasyse, a Roman Catholic, was made First Lord of the Treasury; and Dover, another Roman Catholic, had a seat at the board. The appointment of a ruined gambler to such a trust would alone have sufficed to disgust the public. The dissolute Etherege, who then resided at Ratisbon as English envoy, could not refrain from expressing, with a sneer, his hope that his old boon companion, Dover, would keep the King's money better than his own. In order that the finances might not be ruined by incapable and inexperienced Papists, the obsequious, diligent

* Sheridan MS.; Oldmixon's Memoirs of Ireland; King's State of the Protestants of Ireland, particularly chapter iii.; Apology for the Protestants of Ireland, 1689.

† Secret Consults of the Romish Party in Ireland, 1690.

Digitized by Google

and silent Godolphin was named a Commissioner of the Treasury, but continued to be Chamberlain to the Queen.*

The dismission of the two brothers is a great epoch in the reign of James. From that time it was clear that what he really wanted was not liberty of conscience for the members of his own church, but liberty to persecute the members of other churches. Pretending to abhor tests, he had himself imposed a test. He thought it hard, he thought it monstrous, that able and loyal men should be excluded from the public service solely for being Roman Catholics. Yet he had himself turned out of office a Treasurer, whom he admitted to be both loyal and able, solely for being a Protestant. The cry was that a general proscription was at hand, and that every public functionary must make up his mind to lose his soul or to lose his place.† Who indeed could hope to stand where the Hydes had fallen? They were the brothers in law of the King, the uncles and natural guardians of his children, his friends from early youth, his steady adherents in adversity and peril, his obsequious servants since he had been on the throne. Their sole crime was their religion; and for this crime they had been discarded. In great perturbation men began to look round for help; and soon all eyes were fixed on one whom a rare concurrence both of personal qualities and of fortuitous circumstances pointed out as the deliverer.

Effect of the fall of the Hydes.

* London Gazette, Jan. 6. and March 14. 168⅘; Evelyn's Diary, March 10. Etherege's letter to Dover is in the British Museum.

† "Pare che gli animi sono inaspriti della voce che corre per il popolo, d'esser cacciato il detto ministro per non essere Cattolico, perciò tirarsi al esterminio de' Protestanti."—Adda, Dec. 31 Jan. 10. 1687.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER VII.

THE place which William Henry, Prince of Orange Nassau, occupies in the history of England and of mankind is so great that it may be desirable to portray with some minuteness the strong lineaments of his character.*

1687 William, Prince of Orange.

He was now in his thirty-seventh year. But both in body and in mind he was older than other men of the same age. Indeed it might be said that he had never been young. His external appearance is almost as well known to us as to his own captains and counsellors. Sculptors, painters, and medallists exerted their utmost skill in the work of transmitting his features to posterity; and his features were such as no artist could fail to seize, and such as, once seen, could never be forgotten. His name at once calls up before us a slender and feeble frame, a lofty and ample forehead, a nose curved like the beak of an eagle, an eye rivalling that of an eagle in brightness and keenness, a thoughtful and somewhat sullen brow, a firm and somewhat peevish mouth, a cheek pale, thin, and deeply furrowed by sickness and by care. That pensive, severe, and solemn aspect could scarcely have

His appearance.

* The chief materials from which I have taken my description of the Prince of Orange will be found in Burnet's History, in Temple's and Gourville's Memoirs, in the Negotiations of the Counts of Estrades and Avaux, in Sir George Downing's Letters to Lord Chancellor Clarendon, in Wagenaar's voluminous History, in Van Kamper's Karakterkunde der Vaderlandsche Geschiedenis, and, above all, in William's own confidential correspondence, of which the Duke of Portland permitted Sir James Mackintosh to take a copy.

Digitized by Google

belonged to a happy or a goodhumoured man. But it indicates in a manner not to be mistaken capacity equal to the most arduous enterprises, and fortitude not to be shaken by reverses or dangers.

Nature had largely endowed William with the qualities of a great ruler; and education had developed those qualities in no common degree. With strong natural sense, and rare force of will, he found himself, when first his mind began to open, a fatherless and motherless child, the chief of a great but depressed and disheartened party, and the heir to vast and indefinite pretensions, which excited the dread and aversion of the oligarchy then supreme in the United Provinces. The common people, fondly attached during three generations to his house, indicated, whenever they saw him, in a manner not to be mistaken, that they regarded him as their rightful head. The able and experienced ministers of the republic, mortal enemies of his name, came every day to pay their feigned civilities to him, and to observe the progress of his mind. The first movements of his ambition were carefully watched: every unguarded word uttered by him was noted down; nor had he near him any adviser on whose judgment reliance could be placed. He was scarcely fifteen years old when all the domestics who were attached to his interest, or who enjoyed any share of his confidence, were removed from under his roof by the jealous government. He remonstrated with energy beyond his years, but in vain. Vigilant observers saw the tears more than once rise in the eyes of the young state prisoner. His health, naturally delicate, sank for a time under the emotions which his desolate situation had produced. Such situations bewilder and unnerve the weak, but call forth all the strength of the strong. Surrounded by snares in which an ordinary youth would have perished, William learned to tread at once warily and firmly. Long

His early life and education.

Digitized by Google

before he reached manhood he knew how to keep secrets, how to baffle curiosity by dry and guarded answers, how to conceal all passions under the same show of grave tranquillity. Meanwhile he made little proficiency in fashionable or literary accomplishments. The manners of the Dutch nobility of that age wanted the grace which was found in the highest perfection among the gentlemen of France, and which, in an inferior degree, embellished the Court of England; and his manners were altogether Dutch. Even his countrymen thought him blunt. To foreigners he often seemed churlish. In his intercourse with the world in general he appeared ignorant or negligent of those arts which double the value of a favour and take away the sting of a refusal. He was little interested in letters or science. The discoveries of Newton and Leibnitz, the poems of Dryden and Boileau, were unknown to him. Dramatic performances tired him; and he was glad to turn away from the stage and to talk about public affairs, while Orestes was raving, or while Tartuffe was pressing Elmira's hand. He had indeed some talent for sarcasm, and not seldom employed, quite unconsciously, a natural rhetoric, quaint, indeed, but vigorous and original. He did not, however, in the least affect the character of a wit or of an orator. His attention had been confined to those studies which form strenuous and sagacious men of business. From a child he listened with interest when high questions of alliance, finance, and war were discussed. Of geometry he learned as much as was necessary for the construction of a ravelin or a hornwork. Of languages, by the help of a memory singularly powerful, he learned as much as was necessary to enable him to comprehend and answer without assistance everything that was said to him, and every letter which he received. The Dutch was his own tongue. With the French he was not less familiar. He understood Latin,

Digitized by Google

Italian, and Spanish. He spoke and wrote English and German, inelegantly, it is true, and inexactly, but fluently and intelligibly. No qualification could be more important to a man whose life was to be passed in organising great alliances, and in commanding armies assembled from different countries.

His theological opinions.

One class of philosophical questions had been forced on his attention by circumstances, and seems to have interested him more than might have been expected from his general character. Among the Protestants of the United Provinces, as among the Protestants of our island, there were two great religious parties which almost exactly coincided with two great political parties. The chiefs of the municipal oligarchy were Arminians, and were commonly regarded by the multitude as little better than Papists. The princes of Orange had generally been the patrons of the Calvinistic divinity, and owed no small part of their popularity to their zeal for the doctrines of election and final perseverance, a zeal not always enlightened by knowledge or tempered by humanity. William had been carefully instructed from a child in the theological system to which his family was attached; and he regarded that system with even more than the partiality which men generally feel for a hereditary faith. He had ruminated on the great enigmas which had been discussed in the Synod of Dort, and had found in the austere and inflexible logic of the Genevese school something which suited his intellect and his temper. That example of intolerance indeed which some of his predecessors had set he never imitated. For all persecution he felt a fixed aversion, which he avowed, not only where the avowal was obviously politic, but on occasions where it seemed that his interest would have been promoted by dissimulation or by silence. His theological opinions, however, were even more decided than those of his ancestors The tenet of

Digitized by Google

predestination was the keystone of his religion. He often declared that, if he were to abandon that tenet, he must abandon with it all belief in a superintending Providence, and must become a mere Epicurean. Except in this single instance, all the sap of his vigorous mind was early drawn away from the speculative to the practical. The faculties which are necessary for the conduct of important business ripened in him at a time of life when they have scarcely begun to blossom in ordinary men. Since Octavius the world had seen no such instance of precocious statesmanship. Skilful diplomatists were surprised to hear the weighty observations which at seventeen the Prince made on public affairs, and still more surprised to see a lad, in situations in which he might have been expected to betray strong passion, preserve a composure as imperturbable as their own. At eighteen he sate among the fathers of the commonwealth, grave, discreet, and judicious as the oldest among them. At twenty one, in a day of gloom and terror, he was placed at the head of the administration. At twenty three he was renowned throughout Europe as a soldier and a politician. He had put domestic factions under his feet: he was the soul of a mighty coalition; and he had contended with honour in the field against some of the greatest generals of the age.

His military qualifications.

His personal tastes were those rather of a warrior than of a statesman: but he, like his great-grandfather, the silent prince who founded the Batavian commonwealth, occupies a far higher place among statesmen than among warriors. The event of battles, indeed, is not an unfailing test of the abilities of a commander; and it would be peculiarly unjust to apply this test to William; for it was his fortune to be almost always opposed to captains who were consummate masters of their art, and to troops far superior in discipline to his own. Yet

Digitized by Google

there is reason to believe that he was by no means equal, as a general in the field, to some who ranked far below him in intellectual powers. To those whom he trusted he spoke on this subject with the magnanimous frankness of a man who had done great things, and who could well afford to acknowledge some deficiencies. He had never, he said, served an apprenticeship to the military profession. He had been placed, while still a boy, at the head of an army. Among his officers there had been none competent to instruct him. His own blunders and their consequences had been his only lessons. "I would give," he once exclaimed, "a good part of my estates to have served a few campaigns under the Prince of Condé before I had to command against him." It is not improbable that the circumstance which prevented William from attaining any eminent dexterity in strategy may have been favourable to the general vigour of his intellect. If his battles were not those of a great tactician, they entitled him to be called a great man. No disaster could for one moment deprive him of his firmness or of the entire possession of all his faculties. His defeats were repaired with such marvellous celerity that, before his enemies had sung the Te Deum, he was again ready for conflict; nor did his adverse fortune ever deprive him of the respect and confidence of his soldiers. That respect and confidence he owed in no small measure to his personal courage. Courage, in the degree which is necessary to carry a soldier without disgrace through a campaign, is possessed, or might, under proper training, be acquired, by the great majority of men. But courage like that of William is rare indeed. He was proved by every test; by war, by wounds, by painful and depressing maladies, by raging seas, by the imminent and constant risk of assassination, a risk which has shaken very strong nerves, a risk which severely tried even the adamantine fortitude of

Digitized by Google

Cromwell. Yet none could ever discover what that thing was which the Prince of Orange feared. His advisers could with difficulty induce him to take any precaution against the pistols and daggers of conspirators.* Old sailors were amazed at the composure which he preserved amidst roaring breakers on a perilous coast. In battle his bravery made him conspicuous even among tens of thousands of brave warriors, drew forth the generous applause of hostile armies, and was scarcely ever questioned even by the injustice of hostile factions. During his first campaigns he exposed himself like a man who sought for death, was always foremost in the charge and last in the retreat, fought, sword in hand, in the thickest press, and, with a musket ball in his arm and the blood streaming over his cuirass, still stood his ground and waved his hat under the hottest fire. His friends adjured him to take more care of a life invaluable to his country; and his most illustrious antagonist, the great Condé, remarked, after the bloody day of Seneff, that the Prince of Orange had in all things borne himself like an old general, except in exposing himself like a young soldier. William denied that he was guilty of temerity. It was, he said, from a sense of duty, and on a cool calculation of what the public interest required, that he was always at the post of danger. The troops which he commanded had been little used to war, and shrank from a close encounter with the veteran soldiery of France. It

* William was earnestly entreated by his friends, after the peace of Ryswick, to speak seriously to the French ambassador about the schemes of assassination which the Jacobites of Saint Germain's were constantly contriving. The cold magnanimity with which these intimations of danger were received is singularly characteristic. To Bentinck, who had sent from Paris very alarming intelligence, William merely replied, at the end of a long letter of business, — "Pour les assasins je ne luy en ay pas voulu parler, croiant que c'étoit au desous de moy." May $\frac{1}{12}$. 1698. I keep the original orthography, if it is to be so called.

Digitized by Google

was necessary that their leader should show them how battles were to be won. And in truth more than one day which had seemed hopelessly lost was retrieved by the hardihood with which he rallied his broken battalions and cut down the cowards who set the example of flight. Sometimes, however, it seemed that he had a strange pleasure in venturing his person. It was remarked that his spirits were never so high and his manners never so gracious and easy as amidst the tumult and carnage of a battle. Even in his pastimes he liked the excitement of danger. Cards, chess, and billiards gave him no pleasure. The chase was his favourite recreation; and he loved it most when it was most hazardous. His leaps were sometimes such that his boldest companions did not like to follow him. He seems even to have thought the most hardy field sports of England effeminate, and to have pined in the Great Park of Windsor for the game which he had been used to drive to bay in the forests of Guelders, wolves, and wild boars, and huge stags with sixteen antlers.*

His love of danger: his bad health.

The audacity of his spirit was the more remarkable because his physical organisation was unusually delicate. From a child he had been weak and sickly. In the prime of manhood his complaints had been aggravated by a severe attack of smallpox. He was asthmatic and consumptive. His slender frame was shaken by a constant hoarse cough. He could not sleep unless his head was propped by several pillows, and could

* From Windsor he wrote to Bentinck, then ambassador at Paris. "J'ay pris avant hier un cerf dans la forest avec les chains du Pr. de Denm. et ay fait un assez jolie chasse, autant que ce vilain paiis le permest." March 20. April 1. 1698. The spelling is bad, but not worse than Napoleon's. William wrote in better humour from Loo. "Nous avons pris deux gros cerfs, le premier dans Dorewaert, qui est un des plus gros que je sache avoir jamais pris. Il porte seize." Oct. 25. Nov. 4. 1697.

Digitized by Google

scarcely draw his breath in any but the purest air. Cruel headaches frequently tortured him. Exertion soon fatigued him. The physicians constantly kept up the hopes of his enemies by fixing some date beyond which, if there were anything certain in medical science, it was impossible that his broken constitution could hold out. Yet, through a life which was one long disease, the force of his mind never failed, on any great occasion, to bear up his suffering and languid body.

Coldness of his manners and strength of his emotions.

He was born with violent passions and quick sensibilities: but the strength of his emotions was not suspected by the world. From the multitude his joy and his grief, his affection and his resentment, were hidden by a phlegmatic serenity, which made him pass for the most coldblooded of mankind. Those who brought him good news could seldom detect any sign of pleasure. Those who saw him after a defeat looked in vain for any trace of vexation. He praised and reprimanded, rewarded and punished, with the stern tranquillity of a Mohawk chief: but those who knew him well and saw him near were aware that under all this ice a fierce fire was constantly burning. It was seldom that anger deprived him of power over himself. But when he was really enraged the first outbreak of his passion was terrible. It was indeed scarcely safe to approach him. On these rare occasions, however, as soon as he regained his selfcommand, he made such ample reparation to those whom he had wronged as tempted them to wish that he would go into a fury again. His affection was as impetuous as his wrath. Where he loved, he loved with the whole energy of his strong mind. When death separated him from what he loved, the few who witnessed his agonies trembled for his reason and his life. To a very small circle of intimate friends, on whose fidelity and secrecy he could absolutely

Digitized by Google

depend, he was a different man from the reserved and stoical William whom the multitude supposed to be destitute of human feelings. He was kind, cordial, open, even convivial and jocose, would sit at table many hours, and would bear his full share in festive conversation. Highest in his favour stood a gentleman of his household named Bentinck, sprung from a noble Batavian race, and destined to be the founder of one of the great patrician houses of England. The fidelity of Bentinck had been tried by no common test. It was while the United Provinces were struggling for existence against the French power that the young Prince on whom all their hopes were fixed was seized by the smallpox. That disease had been fatal to many members of his family, and at first wore, in his case, a peculiarly malignant aspect. The public consternation was great. The streets of the Hague were crowded from daybreak to sunset by persons anxiously asking how His Highness was. At length his complaint took a favourable turn. His escape was attributed partly to his own singular equanimity, and partly to the intrepid and indefatigable friendship of Bentinck. From the hands of Bentinck alone William took food and medicine. By Bentinck alone William was lifted from his bed and laid down in it. "Whether Bentinck slept or not while I was ill," said William to Temple, with great tenderness, "I know not. But this I know, that, through sixteen days and nights, I never once called for anything but that Bentinck was instantly at my side." Before the faithful servant had entirely performed his task, he had himself caught the contagion. Still, however, he bore up against drowsiness and fever till his master was pronounced convalescent. Then, at length, Bentinck asked leave to go home. It was time: for his limbs would no longer support him. He was in great danger, but recovered, and, as soon as he left his

His friendship for Bentinck.

Digitized by Google

bed, hastened to the army, where, during many sharp campaigns, he was ever found, as he had been in peril of a different kind, close to William's side.

Such was the origin of a friendship as warm and pure as any that ancient or modern history records. The descendants of Bentinck still preserve many letters written by William to their ancestor: and it is not too much to say that no person who has not studied those letters can form a correct notion of the Prince's character. He, whom even his admirers generally accounted the most distant and frigid of men, here forgets all distinctions of rank, and pours out all his thoughts with the ingenuousness of a schoolboy. He imparts without reserve secrets of the highest moment. He explains with perfect simplicity vast designs affecting all the governments of Europe. Mingled with his communications on such subjects are other communications of a very different, but perhaps not of a less interesting kind. All his adventures, all his personal feelings, his long runs after enormous stags, his carousals on Saint Hubert's day, the growth of his plantations, the failure of his melons, the state of his stud, his wish to procure an easy pad nag for his wife, his vexation at learning that one of his household, after ruining a girl of good family, refused to marry her, his fits of sea sickness, his coughs, his headaches, his devotional moods, his gratitude for the divine protection after a great escape, his struggles to submit himself to the divine will after a disaster, are described with an amiable garrulity hardly to have been expected from the most discreet and sedate statesman of the age. Still more remarkable is the careless effusion of his tenderness, and the brotherly interest which he takes in his friend's domestic felicity. When an heir is born to Bentinck, "he will live, I hope," says William, "to be as good a fellow as you are; and, if I should have a son, our children will love each other, I hope, as

Digitized by Google

we have done."* Through life he continues to regard the little Bentincks with paternal kindness. He calls them by endearing diminutives: he takes charge of them in their father's absence, and, though vexed at being forced to refuse them any pleasure, will not suffer them to go on a hunting party, where there would be risk of a push from a stag's horn, or to sit up late at a riotous supper.† When their mother is taken ill during her husband's absence, William, in the midst of business of the highest moment, finds time to send off several expresses in one day with short notes containing intelligence of her state.‡ On one occasion, when she is pronounced out of danger after a severe attack, the Prince breaks forth into fervent expressions of gratitude to God. "I write," he says, "with tears of joy in my eyes."§ There is a singular charm in such letters, penned by a man whose irresistible energy and inflexible firmness extorted the respect of his enemies, whose cold and ungracious demeanour repelled the attachment of almost all his partisans, and whose mind was occupied by gigantic schemes which have changed the face of the world.

His kindness was not misplaced. Bentinck was early pronounced by Temple to be the best and truest servant that ever prince had the good fortune to possess, and continued through life to merit that honourable character. The friends were indeed made for each other. William wanted neither a guide nor a flatterer. Having a firm and just reliance on his own judgment, he was not partial to counsellors who

* March 3. 1679.

† "Voilà en peu de mot le detail de nostre St. Hubert. Et j'ay eu soin que M. Woodstoc" (Bentinck's eldest son) "n'a point esté à la chasse, bien moin au soupé, quoyqu'il fut icy. Vous pouvez pourtant croire que de n'avoir pas chassé l'a un peu mortifié, mais je ne l'ay pas ausé prendre sur moy, puisque vous m'aviez dit que vous ne le souhaitiez pas." From Loo, Nov. 4. 1697.

‡ On the 15th of June, 1688.

§ September 6 1679.

Digitized by Google

dealt much in suggestions and objections. At the same time he had too much discernment, and too much elevation of mind, to be gratified by sycophancy. The confidant of such a prince ought to be a man, not of inventive genius or commanding spirit, but brave and faithful, capable of executing orders punctually, of keeping secrets inviolably, of observing facts vigilantly, and of reporting them truly; and such a man was Bentinck.

Mary, Princess of Orange.

William was not less fortunate in marriage than in friendship. Yet his marriage had not at first promised much domestic happiness. His choice had been determined chiefly by political considerations: nor did it seem likely that any strong affection would grow up between a handsome girl of sixteen, well disposed indeed, and naturally intelligent, but ignorant and simple, and a bridegroom who, though he had not completed his twenty-eighth year, was in constitution older than her father, whose manner was chilling, and whose head was constantly occupied by public business or by field sports. For a time William was a negligent husband. He was indeed drawn away from his wife by other women, particularly by one of her ladies, Elizabeth Villiers, who, though destitute of personal attractions, and disfigured by a hideous squint, possessed talents which well fitted her to partake his cares.* He was indeed ashamed of his errors, and spared no pains to conceal them: but, in spite of all his precautions, Mary well knew that he was not strictly faithful to her. Spies and talebearers, encouraged by her father, did their best to inflame her resentment. A man of a very different character, the excellent Ken, who was her chaplain at the Hague during some months, was so much incensed by her wrongs that he, with more zeal than discretion, threatened to reprimand her

* See Swift's account of her in the Journal to Stella.

Digitized by Google

husband severely.* She, however, bore her injuries with a meekness and patience which deserved, and gradually obtained, William's esteem and gratitude. Yet there still remained one cause of estrangement. A time would probably come when the Princess, who had been educated only to work embroidery, to play on the spinet, and to read the Bible and the Whole Duty of Man, would be the chief of a great monarchy, and would hold the balance of Europe, while her lord, ambitious, versed in affairs, and bent on great enterprises, would find in the British government no place marked out for him, and would hold power only from her bounty and during her pleasure. It is not strange that a man so fond of authority as William, and so conscious of a genius for command, should have strongly felt that jealousy which, during a few hours of royalty, put dissension between Guildford Dudley and the Lady Jane, and which produced a rupture still more tragical between Darnley and the Queen of Scots. The Princess of Orange had not the faintest suspicion of her husband's feelings. Her preceptor, Bishop Compton, had instructed her carefully in religion, and had especially guarded her mind against the arts of Roman Catholic divines, but had left her profoundly ignorant of the English constitution and of her own position. She knew that her marriage vow bound her to obey her husband; and it had never occurred to her that the relation in which they stood to each other might one day be inverted. She had been nine years married before she discovered the cause of William's discontent; nor would she ever have learned it from himself. In general his temper inclined him rather to brood over his griefs than to give utterance to them; and in this particular case his lips were sealed by a very natural

* Henry Sidney's Journal of March 31. 1680, in Mr. Blencowe's interesting collection.

Digitized by Google

delicacy. At length a complete explanation and reconciliation were brought about by the agency of Gilbert Burnet.

Gilbert Burnet.

The fame of Burnet has been attacked with singular malice and pertinacity. The attack began early in his life, and is still carried on with undiminished vigour, though he has now been more than a century and a quarter in his grave. He is indeed as fair a mark as factious animosity and petulant wit could desire. The faults of his understanding and temper lie on the surface, and cannot be missed. They were not the faults which are ordinarily considered as belonging to his country. Alone among the many Scotchmen who have raised themselves to distinction and prosperity in England, he had that character which satirists, novelists, and dramatists have agreed to ascribe to Irish adventurers. His high animal spirits, his boastfulness, his undissembled vanity, his propensity to blunder, his provoking indiscretion, his unabashed audacity, afforded inexhaustible subjects of ridicule to the Tories. Nor did his enemies omit to compliment him, sometimes with more pleasantry than delicacy, on the breadth of his shoulders, the thickness of his calves, and his success in matrimonial projects on amorous and opulent widows. Yet Burnet, though open in many respects to ridicule, and even to serious censure, was no contemptible man. His parts were quick, his industry unwearied, his reading various and most extensive. He was at once a historian, an antiquary, a theologian, a preacher, a pamphleteer, a debater, and an active political leader; and in every one of these characters he made himself conspicuous among able competitors. The many spirited tracts which he wrote on passing events are now known only to the curious: but his History of his own Times, his History of the Reformation, his Exposition of the Articles, his Discourse of Pastoral Care, his

Digitized by Google

Life of Hale, his Life of Wilmot, are still reprinted, nor is any good private library without them. Against such a fact as this all the efforts of detractors are vain. A writer, whose voluminous works, in several branches of literature, find numerous readers a hundred and thirty years after his death, may have had great faults, but must also have had great merits: and Burnet had great merits, a fertile and vigorous mind, and a style, far indeed removed from faultless purity, but generally clear, often lively, and sometimes rising to solemn and fervid eloquence. In the pulpit the effect of his discourses, which were delivered without any note, was heightened by a noble figure and by pathetic action. He was often interrupted by the deep hum of his audience; and when, after preaching out the hourglass, which in those days was part of the furniture of the pulpit, he held it up in his hand, the congregation clamorously encouraged him to go on till the sand had run off once more.* In his moral character, as in his intellect, great blemishes were more than compensated by great excellence. Though often misled by prejudice and passion, he was emphatically an honest man. Though he was not secure from the seductions of vanity, his spirit was raised high above the influence both of cupidity and of fear. His nature was kind, generous, grateful, forgiving.† His religious zeal, though steady

* Speaker Onslow's note on Burnet, i. 596.; Johnson's Life of Sprat.

† No person has contradicted Burnet more frequently or with more asperity than Dartmouth. Yet Dartmouth wrote, "I do not think he designedly published anything he believed to be false." At a later period Dartmouth, provoked by some remarks on himself in the second volume of the Bishop's history, retracted this praise: but to such a retractation little importance can be attached. Even Swift has the justice to say, "After all, he was a man of generosity and goodnature."—Short Remarks on Bishop Burnet's History.

It is usual to censure Burnet as a singularly inaccurate historian; but I believe the charge to be altogether unjust. He appears to be singularly inaccurate only because his narrative has been

Digitized by Google

and ardent, was in general restrained by humanity, and by a respect for the rights of conscience. Strongly attached to what he regarded as the spirit of Christianity, he looked with indifference on rites, names, and forms of ecclesiastical polity, and was by no means disposed to be severe even on infidels and heretics whose lives were pure, and whose errors appeared to be the effect rather of some perversion of the understanding than of the depravity of the heart. But, like many other good men of that age, he regarded the case of the Church of Rome as an exception to all ordinary rules.

Burnet had during some years enjoyed an European reputation. His History of the Reformation had been received with loud applause by all Protestants, and had been felt by the Roman Catholics as a severe blow. The greatest Doctor that the Church of Rome has produced since the schism of the sixteenth century, Bossuet, Bishop of Meaux, was engaged in framing an elaborate reply. Burnet had been honoured by a vote of thanks from one of the zealous Parliaments which had sate during the excitement of the Popish plot, and had been exhorted, in the name of the Commons of England, to continue his historical researches. He had been admitted to familiar conversation both with Charles and James, had lived on terms of close intimacy with several distinguished statesmen, particularly with Halifax, and had been the spiritual guide of some persons of the highest note. He had reclaimed from atheism and from licentiousness one of the most brilliant libertines of the age, John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester. Lord

subjected to a scrutiny singularly severe and unfriendly. If any Whig thought it worth while to subject Reresby's Memoirs, North's Examen, Mulgrave's Account of the Revolution, or the Life of James the Second, to a similar scrutiny, it would soon appear that Burnet was far indeed from being the most inexact writer of his time.

Digitized by Google

Stafford, the victim of Oates, had, though a Roman Catholic, been edified in his last hours by Burnet's exhortations touching those points on which all Christians agree. A few years later a more illustrious sufferer, Lord Russell, had been accompanied by Burnet from the Tower to the scaffold in Lincoln's Inn Fields. The Court had neglected no means of gaining so active and able a divine. Neither royal blandishments nor promises of valuable preferment had been spared. But Burnet, though infected in early youth by those servile doctrines which were commonly held by the clergy of that age, had become on conviction a Whig; and he firmly adhered through all vicissitudes to his principles. He had, however, no part in that conspiracy which brought so much disgrace and calamity on the Whig party, and not only abhorred the murderous designs of Goodenough and Ferguson, but was of opinion that even his beloved and honoured friend Russell had gone to unjustifiable lengths against the government. A time at length arrived when innocence was not a sufficient protection. Burnet, though not guilty of any legal offence, was pursued by the vengeance of the Court. He retired to the Continent, and, after passing about a year in those wanderings through Switzerland, Italy, and Germany, of which he has left us an agreeable narrative, reached the Hague in the summer of 1686, and was received there with kindness and respect. He had many free conversations with the Princess on politics and religion, and soon became her spiritual director and confidential adviser. William proved a much more gracious host than could have been expected. Of all faults officiousness and indiscretion were the most offensive to him; and Burnet was allowed even by friends and admirers to be the most officious and indiscreet of mankind. But the sagacious Prince perceived that this pushing talkative divine, who was always blab-

Digitized by Google

bing secrets, putting impertinent questions, obtruding unasked advice, was nevertheless an upright, courageous and able man, well acquainted with the temper and the views of British sects and factions. The fame of Burnet's eloquence and erudition was also widely spread. William was not himself a reading man. But he had now been many years at the head of the Dutch administration, in an age when the Dutch press was one of the most formidable engines by which the public mind of Europe was moved, and, though he had no taste for literary pleasures, was far too wise and too observant to be ignorant of the value of literary assistance. He was aware that a popular pamphlet might sometimes be of as much service as a victory in the field. He also felt the importance of having always near him some person well informed as to the civil and ecclesiastical polity of our island: and Burnet was eminently qualified to be of use as a living dictionary of British affairs. For his knowledge, though not always accurate, was of immense extent; and there were in England and Scotland few eminent men of any political or religious party with whom he had not conversed. He was therefore admitted to as large a share of favour and confidence as was granted to any but those who composed the very small inmost knot of the Prince's private friends. When the Doctor took liberties, which was not seldom the case, his patron became more than usually cold and sullen, and sometimes uttered a short dry sarcasm which would have struck dumb any person of ordinary assurance. In spite of such occurrences, however, the amity between this singular pair continued, with some temporary interruptions, till it was dissolved by death. Indeed, it was not easy to wound Burnet's feelings. His selfcomplacency, his animal spirits, and his want of tact, were such that, though he frequently gave offence, he never took it.

Digitized by Google

All the peculiarities of his character fitted him to be the peacemaker between William and Mary. When persons who ought to esteem and love each other are kept asunder, as often happens, by some cause which three words of frank explanation would remove, they are fortunate if they possess an indiscreet friend who blurts out the whole truth. Burnet plainly told the Princess what the feeling was which preyed upon her husband's mind. She learned for the first time, with no small astonishment, that, when she became Queen of England, William would not share her throne. She warmly declared that there was no proof of conjugal submission and affection which she was not ready to give. Burnet, with many apologies and with solemn protestations that no human being had put words into his mouth, informed her that the remedy was in her own hands. She might easily, when the crown devolved on her, induce her Parliament not only to give the regal title to her husband, but even to transfer to him by a legislative act the administration of the government. "But," he added, "your Royal Highness ought to consider well before you announce any such resolution. For it is a resolution which, having once been announced, cannot safely or easily be retracted." "I want no time for consideration," answered Mary. "It is enough that I have an opportunity of showing my regard for the Prince. Tell him what I say; and bring him to me that he may hear it from my own lips." Burnet went in quest of William: but William was many miles off after a stag. It was not till the next day that the decisive interview took place. "I did not know till yesterday," said Mary, "that there was such a difference between the laws of England and the laws of God. But I now promise you that you shall always bear rule; and, in return, I ask only this, that, as I shall observe the precept which enjoins wives to obey their

He brings about a good understanding between the Prince and Princess.

Digitized by Google

husbands, you will observe that which enjoins husbands to love their wives." Her generous affection completely gained the heart of William. From that time till the sad day when he was carried away in fits from her dying bed, there was entire friendship and confidence between them. Many of her letters to him are extant; and they contain abundant evidence that this man, unamiable as he was in the eyes of the multitude, had succeeded in inspiring a beautiful and virtuous woman, born his superior, with a passion fond even to idolatry.

The service which Burnet had rendered to his country was of high moment. A time had arrived at which it was important to the public safety that there should be entire concord between the Prince and Princess.

Relations between William and English parties.

Till after the suppression of the Western insurrection grave causes of dissension had separated William from both Whigs and Tories. He had seen with displeasure the attempts of the Whigs to strip the executive government of some powers which he thought necessary to its efficiency and dignity. He had seen with still deeper displeasure the countenance given by a large section of that party to the pretensions of Monmouth. The opposition, it seemed, wished first to make the crown of England not worth the wearing, and then to place it on the head of a bastard and impostor. At the same time the Prince's religious system differed widely from that which was the badge of the Tories. They were Arminians and Prelatists. They looked down on the Protestant Churches of the Continent, and regarded every line of their own liturgy and rubric as scarcely less sacred than the gospels. His opinions touching the metaphysics of theology were Calvinistic. His opinions touching ecclesiastical polity and modes of worship were latitudinarian. He owned that episcopacy was a lawful and convenient form of church government; but he spoke with sharpness and

Digitized by Google

scorn of the bigotry of those who thought episcopal ordination essential to a Christian society. He had no scruple about the vestments and gestures prescribed by the Book of Common Prayer. But he avowed that he should like the rites of the Church of England better if they reminded him less of the rites of the Church of Rome. He had been heard to utter an ominous growl when first he saw, in his wife's private chapel, an altar decked after the Anglican fashion, and had not seemed well pleased at finding her with Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity in her hands.*

His feelings towards England.

He therefore long observed the contest between the English factions attentively, but without feeling a strong predilection for either side. Nor in truth did he ever, to the end of his life, become either a Whig or a Tory. He wanted that which is the common groundwork of both characters; for he never became an Englishman. He saved England, it is true; but he never loved her; and he never obtained her love. To him she was always a land of exile, visited with reluctance and quitted with delight. Even when he rendered to her those services of which, at this day, we feel the happy effects, her welfare was not his chief object. Whatever patriotic feeling he had was for Holland. There was the stately tomb where slept the great politician whose blood, whose name, whose temperament, and whose genius he had inherited. There the very sound of his title was a spell which had, through three generations, called forth the affectionate enthusiasm of boors and artisans. The Dutch language was the language of his nursery. Among the Dutch gentry he had chosen his early friends. The amusements, the architecture, the landscape of his native country, had taken hold

His feelings towards Holland and France.

* Dr. Hooper's MS. narrative, published in the Appendix to Lord Dungannon's Life of William.

Digitized by Google

on his heart. To her he turned with constant fondness from a prouder and fairer rival. In the gallery of Whitehall he pined for the familiar House in the Wood at the Hague, and never was so happy as when he could quit the magnificence of Windsor for his far humbler seat at Loo. During his splendid banishment it was his consolation to create round him, by building, planting, and digging, a scene which might remind him of the formal piles of red brick, of the long canals, and of the symmetrical flowerbeds among which his early life had been passed. Yet even his affection for the land of his birth was subordinate to another feeling which early became supreme in his soul, which mixed itself with all his passions, which impelled him to marvellous enterprises, which supported him when sinking under mortification, pain, sickness, and sorrow, which, towards the close of his career, seemed during a short time to languish, but which soon broke forth again fiercer than ever, and continued to animate him even while the prayer for the departing was read at his bedside. That feeling was enmity to France, and to the magnificent King who, in more than one sense, represented France, and who to virtues and accomplishments eminently French joined in large measure that unquiet, unscrupulous, and vainglorious ambition which has repeatedly drawn on France the resentment of Europe.

It is not difficult to trace the progress of the sentiment which gradually possessed itself of William's whole soul. When he was little more than a boy his country had been attacked by Lewis in ostentatious defiance of justice and public law, had been overrun, had been desolated, had been given up to every excess of rapacity, licentiousness, and cruelty. The Dutch had in dismay humbled themselves before the conqueror, and had implored mercy. They had been told in reply that, if they desired peace, they must resign their independence, and do annual homage to

Digitized by Google

the House of Bourbon. The injured nation, driven to despair, had opened its dykes, and had called in the sea as an ally against the French tyranny. It was in the agony of that conflict, when peasants were flying in terror before the invaders, when hundreds of fair gardens and pleasure houses were buried beneath the waves, when the deliberations of the States were interrupted by the fainting and the loud weeping of ancient senators who could not bear the thought of surviving the freedom and glory of their native land, that William had been called to the head of affairs. For a time it seemed to him that resistance was hopeless. He looked round him for succour, and looked in vain. Spain was unnerved, Germany distracted, England corrupted. Nothing seemed left to the young Stadtholder but to perish sword in hand, or to be the Æneas of a great emigration, and to create another Holland in countries beyond the reach of the tyranny of France. No obstacle would then remain to check the progress of the House of Bourbon. A few years; and that House might add to its dominions Lorraine and Flanders, Castile and Aragon, Naples and Milan, Mexico and Peru. Lewis might wear the imperial crown, might place a prince of his family on the throne of Poland, might be sole master of Europe from the Scythian deserts to the Atlantic Ocean, and of America from regions north of the Tropic of Cancer to regions south of the Tropic of Capricorn. Such was the prospect which lay before William when first he entered on public life, and which never ceased to haunt him till his latest day. The French monarchy was to him what the Roman republic was to Hannibal, what the Ottoman power was to Scanderbeg, what the Southron domination was to Wallace. Religion gave her sanction to that intense and unquenchable animosity. Hundreds of Calvinistic preachers proclaimed that the same power which had set apart Samson from the womb to be the

Digitized by Google

scourge of the Philistine, and which had called Gideon from the threshing floor to smite the Midianite, had raised up William of Orange to be the champion of all free nations and of all pure Churches; nor was this notion without influence on his own mind. To the confidence which the heroic fatalist placed in his high destiny and in his sacred cause is to be partly attributed his singular indifference to danger. He had a great work to do; and till it was done nothing could harm him. Therefore it was that, in spite of the prognostications of physicians, he recovered from maladies which seemed hopeless, that bands of assassins conspired in vain against his life, that the open skiff to which he trusted himself on a starless night, amidst raging waves, and near a treacherous shore, brought him safe to land, and that, on twenty fields of battle, the cannon balls passed him by to right and left. The ardour and perseverance with which he devoted himself to his mission have scarcely any parallel in history. In comparison with his great object he held the lives of other men as cheap as his own. It was but too much the habit even of the most humane and generous soldiers of that age to think very lightly of the bloodshed and devastation inseparable from great martial exploits; and the heart of William was steeled, not only by professional insensibility, but by that sterner insensibility which is the effect of a sense of duty. Three great coalitions, three long and bloody wars in which all Europe from the Vistula to the Western Ocean was in arms, are to be ascribed to his unconquerable energy. When in 1678 the States General, exhausted and disheartened, were desirous of repose, his voice was still against sheathing the sword. If peace was made, it was made only because he could not breathe into other men a spirit as fierce and determined as his own. At the very last moment, in the hope of breaking off the negotiation which he knew to be all but conclu-

Digitized by Google

ded, he fought one of the most bloody and obstinate battles of that age. From the day on which the treaty of Nimeguen was signed, he began to meditate a second coalition. His contest with Lewis, transferred from the field to the cabinet, was soon exasperated by a private feud. In talents, temper, manners, and opinions, the rivals were diametrically opposed to each other. Lewis, polite and dignified, profuse and voluptuous, fond of display and averse from danger, a munificent patron of arts and letters, and a cruel persecutor of Calvinists, presented a remarkable contrast to William, simple in tastes, ungracious in demeanour, indefatigable and intrepid in war, regardless of all the ornamental branches of knowledge, and firmly attached to the theology of Geneva. The enemies did not long observe those courtesies which men of their rank, even when opposed to each other at the head of armies, seldom neglect. William, indeed, went through the form of tendering his best services to Lewis. But this civility was rated at its true value, and requited with a dry reprimand. The great King affected contempt for the petty Prince who was the servant of a confederacy of trading towns; and to every mark of contempt the dauntless Stadtholder replied by a fresh defiance. William took his title, a title which the events of the preceding century had made one of the most illustrious in Europe, from a city which lies on the banks of the Rhone not far from Avignon, and which, like Avignon, though enclosed on every side by the French territory, was properly a fief not of the French but of the Imperial Crown. Lewis, with that ostentatious contempt of public law which was characteristic of him, occupied Orange, dismantled the fortifications, and confiscated the revenues. William declared aloud at his table before many persons that he would make the most Christian King repent the outrage, and when questioned about these words by Lewis's Am-

Digitized by Google

bassador, the Count of Avaux, positively refused either to retract them or to explain them away. The quarrel was carried so far that the French minister could not venture to present himself at the drawing-room of the Princess for fear of receiving some affront.*

The feeling with which William regarded France explains the whole of his policy towards England. His public spirit was an European public spirit. The chief object of his care was not our island, not even his native Holland, but the great community of nations threatened with subjugation by one too powerful member. Those who commit the error of considering him as an English statesman must necessarily see his whole life in a false light, and will be unable to discover any principle, good or bad, Whig or Tory, to which some of his most important acts can be referred. But, when we consider him as a man whose especial task was to join a crowd of feeble, divided and dispirited states in firm and energetic union against a common enemy, when we consider him as a man in whose eyes England was important chiefly because, without her, the great coalition which he projected must be incomplete, we shall be forced to admit that no long career recorded in history has been more uniform from the beginning to the close than that of this great Prince.†

The clue of which we are now possessed will enable us to track without difficulty the course, in reality

* Avaux, Negotiations, Aug. $\frac{12}{22}$., Sept. $\frac{14}{24}$., $\frac{\text{Sept. 28.}}{\text{Oct. 8.}}$, Dec. $\frac{7}{17}$. 1682.

† I cannot deny myself the pleasure of quoting Massillon's unfriendly, yet discriminating and noble, character of William. "Un prince profond dans ses vues; habile à former des ligues et à réunir les esprits; plus heureux à exciter les guerres qu'à combattre; plus à craindre encore dans le secret du cabinet, qu'à la tête des armées; un ennemi que la haine du nom Français avoit rendu capable d'imaginer de grandes choses et de les exécuter; un de ces génies qui semblent être nés pour mouvoir à leur gré les peuples et les souverains; un grand homme, s'il n'avoit jamais voulu être roi." — Oraison funèbre de M. le Dauphin.

Digitized by Google

consistent, though in appearance sometimes tortuous, which he pursued towards our domestic factions. He clearly saw what had not escaped persons far inferior to him in sagacity, that the enterprise on which his whole soul was intent would probably be successful if England were on his side, would be of uncertain issue if England were neutral, and would be hopeless if England acted as she had acted in the days of the Cabal. He saw not less clearly that between the foreign policy and the domestic policy of the English government there was a close connection; that the sovereign of this country, acting in harmony with the legislature, must always have a great sway in the affairs of Christendom, and must also have an obvious interest in opposing the undue aggrandisement of any Continental potentate; that, on the other hand, the sovereign, distrusted and thwarted by the legislature, could be of little weight in European politics, and that the whole of that little weight would be thrown into the wrong scale. The Prince's first wish therefore was that there should be concord between the throne and the Parliament. How that concord should be established, and on which side concessions should be made, were, in his view, questions of secondary importance. He would have been best pleased, no doubt, to see a complete reconciliation effected without the sacrifice of one tittle of the prerogative. For in the integrity of that prerogative he had a reversionary interest; and he was, by nature, at least as covetous of power and as impatient of restraint as any of the Stuarts. But there was no flower of the crown which he was not prepared to sacrifice, even after the crown had been placed on his own head, if he could only be convinced that such a sacrifice was indispensably necessary to his great design. In the days of the Popish plot, therefore, though he disapproved of the violence with which the opposition attacked the royal

His policy consistent throughout.

Digitized by Google

authority, he exhorted the government to give way. The conduct of the Commons, he said, as respected domestic affairs, was most unreasonable: but while the Commons were discontented the liberties of Europe could never be safe; and to that paramount consideration every other consideration ought to yield. On these principles he acted when the Exclusion Bill had thrown the nation into convulsions. There is no reason to believe that he encouraged the opposition to bring forward that bill or to reject the offers of compromise which were repeatedly made from the throne. But when it became clear that, unless that bill were carried, there would be a serious breach between the Commons and the Court, he indicated very intelligibly, though with decorous reserve, his opinion that the representatives of the people ought to be conciliated at any price. When a violent and rapid reflux of public feeling had left the Whig party for a time utterly helpless, he attempted to attain his grand object by a new road perhaps more agreeable to his temper than that which he had previously tried. In the altered temper of the nation there was little chance that any Parliament disposed to cross the wishes of the sovereign would be elected. Charles was for a time master. To gain Charles, therefore, was the Prince's first wish. In the summer of 1683, almost at the moment at which the detection of the Rye House plot made the discomfiture of the Whigs and the triumph of the King complete, events took place elsewhere which William could not behold without extreme anxiety and alarm. The Turkish armies advanced to the suburbs of Vienna. The great Austrian monarchy, on the support of which the Prince had reckoned, seemed to be on the point of destruction. Bentinck was therefore sent in haste from the Hague to London, was charged to omit nothing which might be necessary to conciliate the English court, and was particularly instructed to

Digitized by Google

express in the strongest terms the horror with which his master regarded the Whig conspiracy.

During the eighteen months which followed, there was some hope that the influence of Halifax would prevail, and that the court of Whitehall would return to the policy of the Triple Alliance. To that hope William fondly clung. He spared no effort to propitiate Charles. The hospitality which Monmouth found at the Hague is chiefly to be ascribed to the Prince's anxiety to gratify the real wishes of Monmouth's father. As soon as Charles died, William, still adhering unchangeably to his object, again changed his course. He had sheltered Monmouth, to please the late King. That the present King might have no reason to complain Monmouth was dismissed. We have seen that, when the Western insurrection broke out, the British regiments in the Dutch service were, by the active exertions of the Prince, sent over to their own country on the first requisition. Indeed William even offered to command in person against the rebels; and that the offer was made in perfect sincerity cannot be doubted by those who have perused his confidential letters to Bentinck.*

The Prince was evidently at this time inclined to hope that the great plan, to which in his mind everything else was subordinate, might obtain the approbation and support of his father in law. The high tone which James was then holding towards France, the readiness with which he consented to a defensive

* For example, "Je crois M. Feversham un très brave et honeste homme. Mais je doute s'il a assez d'expérience à diriger une si grande affaire qu'il a sur le bras. Dieu lui donne un succès prompt et heureux! Mais je ne suis pas hors d'inquiétude." July $\frac{7}{17}$. 1685. Again, after he had received the news of the battle of Sedgemoor, "Dieu soit loué du bon succès que les troupes du Roy ont eu contre les rebelles. Je ne doute pas que cette affaire ne soit entièrement assoupie, et que le règne du Roy sera heureux, ce que Dieu veuille." July $\frac{12}{22}$.

Digitized by Google

alliance with the United Provinces, the inclination which he showed to connect himself with the House of Austria, encouraged this expectation. But in a short time the prospect was darkened. The disgrace of Halifax, the breach between James and the Parliament, the prorogation, the announcement distinctly made by the King to the foreign ministers that Continental politics should no longer divert his attention from internal measures tending to strengthen his prerogative and to promote the interest of his Church, put an end to the delusion. It was plain that, when the European crisis came, England would, if James were her master, either remain inactive or act in conjunction with France. And the European crisis was drawing near. The House of Austria had, by a succession of victories, been secured from danger on the side of Turkey, and was no longer under the necessity of submitting patiently to the encroachments and insults of Lewis. Accordingly, in July 1686, a treaty was signed at Augsburg by which the Princes of the Empire bound themselves closely together for the purpose of mutual defence. The Kings of Spain and Sweden were parties to this compact, the King of Spain as sovereign of the provinces contained in the circle of Burgundy, and the King of Sweden as Duke of Pomerania. The confederates declared that they had no intention to attack and no wish to offend any power, but that they were determined to tolerate no infraction of those rights which the Germanic body held under the sanction of public law and public faith. They pledged themselves to stand by each other in case of need, and fixed the amount of force which each member of the league was to furnish if it should be necessary to repel aggression.* The name of William did not appear in this instrument: but all men knew that it was his

Treaty of Augsburg.

* The treaty will be found in the Recueil des Traités, iv. No. 203.

Digitized by Google

work, and foresaw that he would in no long time be again the captain of a coalition against France. Between him and the vassal of France there could, in such circumstances, be no cordial good will. There was no open rupture, no interchange of menaces or reproaches. But the father in law and the son in law were separated completely and for ever.

William becomes the head of the English opposition.

At the very time at which the Prince was thus estranged from the English court, the causes which had hitherto produced a coolness between him and the two great sections of the English people disappeared. A large portion, perhaps a numerical majority, of the Whigs had favoured the pretensions of Monmouth: but Monmouth was now no more. The Tories, on the other hand, had entertained apprehensions that the interests of the Anglican Church might not be safe under the rule of a man bred among Dutch Presbyterians, and well known to hold latitudinarian opinions about robes, ceremonies, and Bishops; but, since that beloved Church had been threatened by far more formidable dangers from a very different quarter, these apprehensions had lost almost all their power. Thus, at the same moment, both the great parties began to fix their hopes and their affections on the same leader. Old republicans could not refuse their confidence to one who had worthily filled, during many years, the highest magistracy of a republic. Old royalists conceived that they acted according to their principles in paying profound respect to a Prince so near to the throne. At this conjuncture it was of the highest moment that there should be entire union between William and Mary. A misunderstanding between the presumptive heiress of the crown and her husband must have produced a schism in that vast mass which was from all quarters gathering round one common rallying point. Happily all risk of such misunderstanding was averted

Digitized by Google

in the critical instant by the interposition of Burnet; and the Prince became the unquestioned chief of the whole of that party which was opposed to the government, a party almost coextensive with the nation.

There is not the least reason to believe that he at this time meditated the great enterprise to which a stern necessity afterwards drove him. He was aware that the public mind of England, though heated by grievances, was by no means ripe for revolution. He would doubtless gladly have avoided the scandal which must be the effect of a mortal quarrel between persons bound together by the closest ties of consanguinity and affinity. Even his ambition made him unwilling to owe to violence that greatness which might soon be his in the ordinary course of nature and of law. For he well knew that, if the crown descended to his wife regularly, all its prerogatives would descend unimpaired with it, and that, if it were obtained by election, it must be taken subject to such conditions as the electors might think fit to impose. He meant, therefore, as it appears, to wait with patience for the day when he might govern by an undisputed title, and to content himself in the meantime with exercising a great influence on English affairs, as first Prince of the blood, and as head of the party which was decidedly preponderant in the nation, and which was certain, whenever a Parliament should meet, to be decidedly preponderant in both Houses.

Mordaunt proposes to William a descent on England.

Already, it is true, he had been urged by an adviser, less sagacious and more impetuous than himself, to try a bolder course. This adviser was the young Lord Mordaunt. That age had produced no more inventive genius, and no more daring spirit. But, if a design was splendid, Mordaunt seldom inquired whether it were practicable. His life was a wild romance made up of mysterious intrigues, both political and amorous, of violent and rapid changes of scene and fortune, and

Digitized by Google

of victories resembling those of Amadis and Launcelot rather than those of Luxemburg and Eugene. The episodes interspersed in this strange story were of a piece with the main plot. Among them were midnight encounters with generous robbers, and rescues of noble and beautiful ladies from ravishers. Mordaunt, having distinguished himself by the eloquence and audacity with which, in the House of Lords, he had opposed the court, repaired, soon after the prorogation, to the Hague, and strongly recommended an immediate descent on England. He had persuaded himself that it would be as easy to surprise three great kingdoms as he long afterwards found it to surprise Barcelona. William listened, meditated, and replied, in general terms, that he took a great interest in English affairs, and would keep his attention fixed on them.* Whatever his purpose had been, it is not likely that he would have chosen a rash and vainglorious knight errant for his confidant. Between the two men there was nothing in common except personal courage, which rose in both to the height of fabulous heroism. Mordaunt wanted merely to enjoy the excitement of conflict, and to make men stare. William had one great end ever before him. Towards that end he was impelled by a strong passion which appeared to him under the guise of a sacred duty. Towards that end he toiled with a patience resembling, as he once said, the patience with which he had seen a boatman on a canal strain against an adverse eddy, often swept back, but never ceasing to pull, and content if, by the labour of hours, a few yards could be gained.† Exploits which brought the Prince no nearer to his object, however glorious they might be in the estimation of the vulgar, were in his judgment boyish vanities, and no part of the real business of life.

William rejects the advice.

* Burnet, i. 762. † Temple's Memoirs.

Digitized by Google

He determined to reject Mordaunt's advice; and there can be no doubt that the determination was wise. Had William, in 1686, or even in 1687, attempted to do what he did with such signal success in 1688, it is probable that many Whigs would have risen in arms at his call. But he would have found that the nation was not yet prepared to welcome a deliverer from a foreign country, and that the Church had not yet been provoked and insulted into forgetfulness of the tenet which had long been her peculiar boast. The old Cavaliers would have flocked to the royal standard. There would probably have been in all the three kingdoms a civil war as long and fierce as that of the preceding generation. While that war was raging in the British Isles, what might not Lewis attempt on the Continent? And what hope would there be for Holland, drained of her troops, and abandoned by her Stadtholder?

Discontent in England after the fall of the Hydes.

William therefore contented himself for the present with taking measures to unite and animate that mighty opposition of which he had become the head. This was not difficult. The fall of the Hydes had excited throughout England extreme alarm and indignation. Men felt that the question now was, not whether Protestantism should be dominant, but whether it should be tolerated. The Treasurer had been succeeded by a board, of which a Papist was the head. The Privy Seal had been entrusted to a Papist. The Lord Lieutenant of Ireland had been succeeded by a man who had absolutely no claim to high place except that he was a Papist. The last person whom a government having in view the general interests of the empire would have sent to Dublin as Deputy was Tyrconnel. His brutal manners made him unfit to represent the majesty of the crown. The feebleness of his understanding and the violence of his temper made him unfit to conduct grave business of state. The deadly animosity which he felt towards the pos-

Digitized by Google

sessors of the greater part of the soil of Ireland made him especially unfit to rule that kingdom. But the intemperance of his bigotry was thought amply to atone for the intemperance of all his other passions; and, in consideration of the hatred which he bore to the reformed faith, he was suffered to indulge without restraint his hatred of the English name. This, then, was the real meaning of His Majesty's respect for the rights of conscience. He wished his Parliament to remove all the disabilities which had been imposed on Papists, merely in order that he might himself impose disabilities equally galling on Protestants. It was plain that, under such a prince, apostasy was the only road to greatness. It was a road, however, which few ventured to take. For the spirit of the nation was thoroughly roused; and every renegade had to endure such an amount of public scorn and detestation as cannot be altogether unfelt even by the most callous natures.

Conversions to Popery.

It is true that several remarkable conversions had recently taken place; but they were such as did little credit to the Church of Rome. Two men of high rank had joined her communion; Henry Mordaunt, Earl of Peterborough, and James Cecil, Earl of Salisbury. But Peterborough, who had been an active soldier, courtier, and negotiator, was now broken down by years and infirmities; and those who saw him totter about the galleries of Whitehall, leaning on a stick and swathed up in flannels and plasters, comforted themselves for his defection by remarking that he had not changed his religion till he had outlived his faculties.* Salisbury was foolish to a proverb. His figure was so bloated by sensual indulgence as to be almost incapable of moving; and this sluggish body was the abode of an equally sluggish

Peterborough.

Salisbury.

* See the poems entitled The Converts and The Delusion.

Digitized by Google

mind. He was represented in popular lampoons as a man made to be duped, as a man who had hitherto been the prey of gamesters, and who might as well be the prey of friars. A pasquinade, which, about the time of Rochester's retirement, was fixed on the door of Salisbury House in the Strand, described in coarse terms the horror with which the wise Robert Cecil, if he could rise from his grave, would see to what a creature his honours had descended.*

These were the highest in station among the proselytes of James. There were other renegades of a very different kind, needy men of parts who were destitute of principle and of all sense of personal dignity. There is reason to believe that among these was William Wycherley, the most licentious and hardhearted writer of a singularly licentious and hardhearted school.† It is certain that Matthew Tindal, who, at a later period, acquired great notoriety by writing against Christianity, was at this time received into the bosom of the infallible Church, a fact which, as may easily be supposed, the divines with whom he was subsequently engaged in controversy did not suffer to sink into oblivion.‡ A still more infamous apostate was Joseph Haines, whose name is now almost forgotten, but who was well known in his own time as an adventurer of versatile parts, sharper, coiner, false witness, sham bail, dancing master, buffoon, poet, comedian. Some of his prologues and epilogues were much admired by his contemporaries: and his merit as an actor was universally acknowledged. This man professed himself a Roman Catholic, and went to Italy in the retinue

Wycherley.

Tindal.

Haines.

* The lines are in the Collection of State Poems.

† Our information about Wycherley is very scanty: but two things are certain, that in his later years he called himself a Papist, and that he received money from James. I have very little doubt that he was a hired convert.

‡ See the article on him in the Biographia Britannica.

Digitized by Google

of Castelmaine, but was soon dismissed for misconduct. If any credit be due to a tradition which was long preserved in the green room, Haines had the impudence to affirm that the Virgin Mary had appeared to him and called him to repentance. After the Revolution, he attempted to make his peace with the town by a penance more scandalous than his offence. One night, before he acted in a farce, he appeared on the stage in a white sheet with a torch in his hand, and recited some profane and indecent doggerel, which he called his recantation.*

Dryden.

With the name of Haines was joined, in many libels, the name of a more illustrious renegade, John Dryden. Dryden was now approaching the decline of life. After many successes and many failures, he had at length attained, by general consent, the first place among living English poets. His claims on the gratitude of James were superior to those of any man of letters in the kingdom. But James cared little for verses and much for money. From the day of his accession he set himself to make small economical reforms, such as bring on a government the reproach of meanness without producing any perceptible relief to the finances. One of the victims of this injudicious parsimony was Dryden. A pension of a hundred a year which had been given to him by Charles and had expired with Charles was not renewed. The demise of the Crown made it necessary that the Poet Laureate should have a new patent; and orders were given that, in this patent, the annual butt of sack, originally granted to Jonson, and continued to Jonson's successors, should be omitted.† This was the only notice which the King,

* See James Quin's account of Haines in Davies's Miscellanies; Tom Brown's Works; Lives of Sharpers; Dryden's Epilogue to the Secular Masque.

† This fact, which escaped the minute researches of Malone, appears from the Treasury Letter Book of 1685.

Digitized by Google

during the first year of his reign, deigned to bestow on the mighty satirist who, in the very crisis of the great struggle of the Exclusion Bill, had spread terror through the Whig ranks. Dryden was poor and impatient of poverty. He knew little and cared little about religion. If any sentiment was deeply fixed in him, that sentiment was an aversion to priests of all persuasions, Levites, Augurs, Muftis, Roman Catholic divines, Presbyterian divines, divines of the Church of England. He was not naturally a man of high spirit; and his pursuits had been by no means such as were likely to give elevation or delicacy to his mind. He had, during many years, earned his daily bread by pandaring to the vicious taste of the pit, and by grossly flattering rich and noble patrons. Self-respect and a fine sense of the becoming were not to be expected from one who had led a life of mendicancy and adulation. Finding that, if he continued to call himself a Protestant, his services would be overlooked, he declared himself a Papist. The King's parsimony speedily relaxed. Dryden's pension was restored: the arrears were paid up; and he was employed to defend his new religion both in prose and verse.*

Two eminent men, Samuel Johnson and Walter Scott, have done their best to persuade themselves and others that this memorable conversion was sincere. It was natural that they should be desirous to remove a disgraceful stain from the memory of one whose genius they justly admired, and with whose political feelings they strongly sympathised; but the impartial historian must with regret pronounce a very

* It has lately been asserted that Dryden's pension was restored long before he turned Papist, and that therefore it ought not to be considered as the price of his apostasy. But this is an entire mistake. Dryden's pension was restored by letters patent of the 4th of March 168⅞; and his apostasy had been the talk of the town at least six weeks before. See Evelyn's Diary, January 19. 168⅞. (1857.)

Digitized by Google

different judgment. There will always be a strong presumption against the sincerity of a conversion by which the convert is directly a gainer. In the case of Dryden there is nothing to countervail this presumption. His theological writings abundantly prove that he had never sought with diligence and anxiety to learn the truth, and that his knowledge both of the Church which he quitted and of the Church which he entered was of the most superficial kind. Nor was his subsequent conduct that of a man whom a strong sense of duty had constrained to take a step of awful importance. Had he been such a man, the same conviction which had led him to join the Church of Rome would surely have prevented him from violating grossly and habitually rules which that Church, in common with every other Christian society, recognises as binding. There would have been a marked distinction between his earlier and his later compositions. He would have looked back with remorse on a literary life of near thirty years, during which his rare powers of diction and versification had been systematically employed in spreading moral corruption. Not a line tending to make virtue contemptible, or to inflame licentious desire, would thenceforward have proceeded from his pen. The truth unhappily is that the dramas which he wrote after his pretended conversion are in no respect less impure or profane than those of his youth. Even when he professed to translate he constantly wandered from his originals in search of images which, if he had found them in his originals, he ought to have shunned. What was bad became worse in his versions. What was innocent contracted a taint from passing through his mind. He made the grossest satires of Juvenal more gross, interpolated loose descriptions in the tales of Boccaccio, and polluted the sweet and limpid poetry of the Georgics with filth which would have moved the loathing of Virgil.

Digitized by Google

The help of Dryden was welcome to those Roman Catholic divines who were painfully sustaining a conflict against all that was most illustrious in the Established Church. They could not disguise from themselves the fact that their style, disfigured with foreign idioms which had been picked up at Rome and Douay, appeared to little advantage when compared with the eloquence of Tillotson and Sherlock. It seemed that it was no light thing to have secured the cooperation of the greatest living master of the English language. The first service which he was required to perform in return for his pension was to defend his Church in prose against Stillingfleet. But the art of saying things well is useless to a man who has nothing to say; and this was Dryden's case. He soon found himself unequally paired with an antagonist whose whole life had been one long training for controversy. The veteran gladiator disarmed the novice, inflicted a few contemptuous scratches, and turned away to encounter more formidable combatants.

The Hind and Panther.

Dryden then betook himself to a weapon at which he was not likely to find his match. He retired for a time from the bustle of coffeehouses and theatres to a quiet retreat in Huntingdonshire, and there composed, with unwonted care and labour, his celebrated poem on the points in dispute between the Churches of Rome and England. The Church of Rome he represented under the similitude of a milk-white hind, ever in peril of death, yet fated not to die. The beasts of the field were bent on her destruction. The quaking hare, indeed, observed a timorous neutrality: but the Socinian fox, the Presbyterian wolf, the Independent bear, the Anabaptist boar, glared fiercely at the spotless creature. Yet she could venture to drink with them at the common watering place under the protection of her friend, the kingly lion. The Church of England was typified by the panther, spotted indeed, but beautiful, too beau-

Digitized by Google

tiful for a beast of prey. The hind and the panther, equally hated by the ferocious population of the forest, conferred apart on their common danger. They then proceeded to discuss the points on which they differed, and, while wagging their tails and licking their jaws, held a long dialogue touching the real presence, the authority of Popes and Councils, the penal laws, the Test Act, Oates's perjuries, Butler's unrequited services to the Cavalier party, Stillingfleet's pamphlets, and Burnet's broad shoulders and fortunate matrimonial speculations.

The absurdity of this plan is obvious. In truth the allegory could not be preserved unbroken through ten lines together. No art of execution could redeem the faults of such a design. Yet the Fable of the Hind and Panther is undoubtedly the most valuable addition which was made to English literature during the short and troubled reign of James the Second. In none of Dryden's works can be found passages more pathetic and magnificent, greater ductility and energy of language, or a more pleasing and various music.

The poem appeared with every advantage which royal patronage could give. A superb edition was printed for Scotland at the Roman Catholic press established in Holyrood House. But men were in no humour to be charmed by the transparent style and melodious numbers of the apostate. The disgust excited by his venality, the alarm excited by the policy of which he was the eulogist, were not to be sung to sleep. The just indignation of the public was inflamed by many who were smarting from his ridicule, and by many who were envious of his renown. In spite of all the restraints under which the press lay, attacks on his life and writings appeared daily. Sometimes he was Bayes, sometimes Poet Squab. He was reminded that in his youth he had paid to the House of Cromwell the same servile

Digitized by Google

court which he was now paying to the House of Stuart. One set of his assailants maliciously reprinted the sarcastic verses which he had written against Popery in days when he could have got nothing by being a Papist. Of the many satirical pieces which appeared on this occasion, the most successful was the joint work of two young men who had lately completed their studies at Cambridge, and had been welcomed as promising novices in the literary coffeehouses of London, Charles Montague and Matthew Prior. Montague was of noble descent: the origin of Prior was so obscure that no biographer has been able to trace it: but both the adventurers were poor and aspiring: both had keen and vigorous minds: both afterwards climbed high; and both united in a remarkable degree the love of letters with skill in those departments of business for which men of letters generally have a strong distaste. Of the fifty poets whose lives Johnson has written, Montague and Prior were the only two who were distinguished by an intimate knowledge of trade and finance. Soon their paths diverged widely. Their early friendship was dissolved. One of them became the chief of the Whig party, and was impeached by the Tories. The other was entrusted with all the mysteries of Tory diplomacy, and was long kept close prisoner by the Whigs. At length, after many eventful years, the associates, so long parted, were reunited in Westminster Abbey.

Change in the policy of the Court towards the Puritans.

Whoever has read the tale of the Hind and Panther with attention must have perceived that, while that work was in progress, a great alteration took place in the views of those who used Dryden as their interpreter. At first the Church of England is mentioned with tenderness and respect, and is exhorted to ally herself with the Roman Catholics against the Protestant Dissenters: but at the close of the poem, and in the preface,

Digitized by Google

which was written after the poem had been finished, the Protestant Dissenters are invited to make common cause with the Roman Catholics against the Church of England.

This change in the language of the court poet was indicative of a great change in the policy of the court. The original purpose of James had been to obtain for the Church of which he was a member, not only complete immunity from all penalties and from all civil disabilities, but also an ample share of ecclesiastical and academical endowments, and at the same time to enforce with rigour the laws against the Puritan sects. All the special dispensations which he had granted had been granted to Roman Catholics. All the laws which bore hardest on the Presbyterians, Independents, and Baptists, had been executed by him with extraordinary rigour. While Hales commanded a regiment, while Powis sate at the Council board, while Massey held a deanery, while breviaries and mass books were printed at Oxford under a royal license, while the host was publicly exposed in London under the protection of the pikes and muskets of the footguards, while friars and monks walked the streets of London in their robes, Baxter was in gaol; Howe was in exile; the Five Mile Act and the Conventicle Act were in full vigour; Puritan writers were compelled to resort to foreign or to secret presses; Puritan congregations could meet only by night or in waste places; and Puritan ministers were forced to preach in the garb of colliers or of sailors. In Scotland the King, while he spared no exertion to extort from the Estates full relief for Roman Catholics, had demanded and obtained new statutes of unprecedented severity against Presbyterians. His conduct to the exiled Huguenots had not less clearly indicated his feelings. We have seen that, when the public munificence had placed in his hands a large sum for the relief of those un-

Digitized by Google

happy men, he, in violation of every law of hospitality and good faith, required them to renounce the Calvinistic ritual to which they were strongly attached, and to conform to the Church of England, before he would dole out to them any portion of the alms which had been entrusted to his care.

Such had been his policy as long as he could cherish any hope that the Church of England would consent to share ascendency with the Church of Rome. That hope at one time amounted to confidence. The enthusiasm with which the Tories hailed his accession, the elections, the dutiful language and ample grants of his Parliament, the suppression of the Western insurrection, the complete prostration of the faction which had attempted to exclude him from the crown, elated him beyond the bounds of reason. He felt an assurance that every obstacle would give way before his power and his resolution. But he was disappointed. His Parliament withstood him. He tried the effects of frowns and menaces. Frowns and menaces failed. He tried the effect of prorogation. From the day of the prorogation the opposition to his designs had been growing stronger and stronger. It seemed clear that, if he effected his purpose, he must effect it in defiance of that great party which had given such signal proofs of fidelity to his office, to his family, and to his person. The whole Anglican priesthood, the whole Cavalier gentry, were against him. In vain had he, by virtue of his ecclesiastical supremacy, enjoined the clergy to abstain from discussing controverted points. Every parish in the nation was warned every Sunday against the errors of Rome; and these warnings were only the more effective, because they were accompanied by professions of reverence for the Sovereign, and of a determination to endure with patience whatever it might be his pleasure to inflict. The royalist knights and esquires who, through forty

Digitized by Google

five years of war and faction, had stood so manfully by the throne, now expressed, in no measured phrase, their resolution to stand as manfully by the Church. Dull as was the intellect of James, despotic as was his temper, he felt that he must change his course. He could not safely venture to outrage all his Protestant subjects at once. If he could bring himself to make concessions to the party which predominated in both Houses, if he could bring himself to leave to the established religion all its dignities, emoluments, and privileges unimpaired, he might still break up Presbyterian meetings, and fill the gaols with Baptist preachers. But, if he was determined to plunder the hierarchy, he must make up his mind to forego the luxury of persecuting the Dissenters. If he was henceforward to be at feud with his old friends, he must make a truce with his old enemies. He could overpower the Anglican Church only by forming against her an extensive coalition, including sects which, though they differed in doctrine and government far more widely from each other than from her, might yet be induced, by their common jealousy of her greatness, and by their common dread of her intolerance, to suspend their mutual animosities till she was no longer able to oppress them.

This plan seemed to him to have one strong recommendation. If he could only succeed in conciliating the Protestant Nonconformists he might flatter himself that he was secure against all chance of rebellion. According to the Anglican divines, no subject could by any provocation be justified in withstanding the Lord's anointed by force. The theory of the Puritan sectaries was very different. Those sectaries had no scruple about smiting tyrants with the sword of Gideon. Many of them did not shrink from using the dagger of Ehud. They were probably even now meditating another Western insurrection, or another Rye House plot. James, therefore, con-

Digitized by Google

ceived that he might safely persecute the Church if he could only gain the Dissenters. The party whose principles afforded him no guarantee would be attached to him by interest. The party whose interests he attacked would be restrained from insurrection by principle.

Influenced by such considerations as these, James, from the time at which he parted in anger with his Parliament, began to meditate a general league of all Nonconformists, Catholic and Protestant, against the established religion. So early as Christmas 1685, the agents of the United Provinces informed the States General that the plan of a general toleration had been arranged and would soon be disclosed.* The reports which had reached the Dutch embassy proved to be premature. The separatists appear, however, to have been treated with more lenity during the year 1686 than during the year 1685. But it was only by slow degrees and after many struggles that the King could prevail on himself to form an alliance with all that he most abhorred. He had to overcome an animosity, not slight or capricious, not of recent origin or hasty growth, but hereditary in his line, strengthened by great wrongs inflicted and suffered through a hundred and twenty eventful years, and intertwined with all his feelings, religious, political, domestic, and personal. Four generations of Stuarts had waged a war to the death with four generations of Puritans; and, through that long war, there had been no Stuart who had hated the Puritans so much, or who had been so much hated by them, as himself. They had tried to blast his honour and to exclude him from his birthright: they had called him incendiary, cutthroat, poisoner: they had driven him from the Admiralty and the Privy Council: they had repeatedly chased him into

* Van Leeuwen, $\frac{\text{Dec. 25.}}{\text{Jan. 4.}}$ 168$\frac{5}{6}$.

Digitized by Google

banishment: they had plotted his assassination: they had risen against him in arms by thousands. He had avenged himself on them by havoc such as England had never before seen. Their heads and quarters were still rotting on poles in all the marketplaces of Somersetshire and Dorsetshire. Aged women, held in high honour among the sectaries for piety and charity, had, for offences which no good prince would have thought deserving even of a severe reprimand, been beheaded and burned alive. Such had been, even in England, the relations between the King and the Puritans; and in Scotland the tyranny of the King and the fury of the Puritans had been such as Englishmen could hardly conceive. To forget an enmity so long and so deadly was no light task for a nature singularly harsh and implacable.

The conflict in the royal mind did not escape the eye of Barillon. At the end of January 1687, he sent a remarkable letter to Versailles. The King,—such was the substance of this document,—had almost convinced himself that he could not obtain entire liberty for Roman Catholics and yet maintain the laws against Protestant Dissenters. He leaned, therefore, to the plan of a general indulgence; but at heart he would be far better pleased if he could, even now, divide his protection and favour between the Church of Rome and the Church of England, to the exclusion of all other religious persuasions.*

A very few days after this despatch had been written, James made his first hesitating and ungracious advances towards the Puritans. He had determined to begin with Scotland, where his power to dispense with Acts of Parliament had been admitted by the obsequious

Partial toleration granted in Scotland.

* Barillon, $\frac{\text{Jan. 31.}}{\text{Feb. 10.}}$ 168$\frac{7}{8}$. "Je crois que, dans le fond, si on ne pouvoit laisser que la religion Anglicane et la Catholique établies par les loix, le Roy d'Angleterre en seroit bien plus content."

Digitized by Google

Estates. On the twelfth of February, accordingly, was published at Edinburgh a proclamation granting relief to scrupulous consciences.* This proclamation fully proves the correctness of Barillon's judgment. Even in the very act of making concessions to the Presbyterians, James could not conceal the loathing with which he regarded them. The toleration given to the Catholics was complete. The Quakers had little reason to complain. But the indulgence vouchsafed to the Presbyterians, who constituted the great body of the Scottish people, was clogged by conditions which made it almost worthless. For the old test, which excluded Catholics and Presbyterians alike from office, was substituted a new test, which admitted the Catholics, but excluded most of the Presbyterians. The Catholics were allowed to build chapels, and even to carry the host in procession anywhere except in the high streets of royal burghs: the Quakers were suffered to assemble in public edifices: but the Presbyterians were interdicted from worshipping God anywhere but in private dwellings: they were not to presume to build meeting houses: they were not even to use a barn or an outhouse for religious exercises; and it was distinctly notified to them that, if they dared to hold conventicles in the open air, the law, which denounced death against both preachers and hearers, should be enforced without mercy. Any Catholic priest might say mass: any Quaker might harangue his brethren: but the Privy Council was directed to see that no Presbyterian minister presumed to preach without a special license from the government. Every line of this instrument, and of the letters by which it was accompanied, shows how much it cost the King to relax in the smallest degree the rigour with which he had ever treated the old enemies of his house.†

* It will be found in Wodrow, Appendix, vol. ii. No. 129.

† Wodrow, Appendix, vol. ii. Nos. 128, 129. 132.

Digitized by Google

There is reason, indeed, to believe that, when he published this proclamation, he had by no means fully made up his mind to a coalition with the Puritans, and that his object was to grant just so much favour to them as might suffice to frighten the Churchmen into submission. He therefore waited a month, in order to see what effect the edict put forth at Edinburgh would produce in England. That month he employed assiduously, by Petre's advice, in what was called closeting. London was very full. It was expected that the Parliament would shortly meet for the despatch of business; and many members were in town. The King set himself to canvass them man by man. He flattered himself that zealous Tories,—and of such, with few exceptions, the House of Commons consisted,—would find it difficult to resist his earnest request, addressed to them, not collectively, but separately, not from the throne, but in the familiarity of conversation. The members, therefore, who came to pay their duty at Whitehall, were taken aside, and honoured with long private interviews. The King pressed them, as they were loyal gentlemen, to gratify him in the one thing on which his heart was fixed. The question, he said, touched his personal honour. The laws enacted in the late reign by factious Parliaments against the Roman Catholics had really been aimed at himself. Those laws had put a stigma on him, had driven him from the Admiralty, had driven him from the Council Board. He had a right to expect that in the repeal of those laws all who loved and reverenced him would concur. When he found his hearers obdurate to exhortation, he resorted to intimidation and corruption. Those who refused to pleasure him in this matter were plainly told that they must not expect any mark of his favour. Penurious as he was, he opened and distributed his hoards. Several of those who had been

Closeting.

Digitized by Google

invited to confer with him left his bedchamber carrying with them money received from the royal hand. The Judges, who were at this time on their spring circuits, were directed by the King to see those members who remained in the country, and to ascertain the intentions of each. The result of this investigation was, that a great majority of the House of Commons seemed fully determined to oppose the measures of the Court.* Among those whose firmness excited general admiration was Arthur Herbert, brother of the Chief Justice, member for Dover, Master of the Robes, and Rear Admiral of England. Arthur Herbert was much loved by the sailors, and was reputed one of the best of the aristocratical class of naval officers. It had been generally supposed that he would readily comply with the royal wishes: for he was heedless of religion: he was fond of pleasure and expense: he had no private estate: his places brought him in four thousand pounds a year; and he had long been reckoned among the most devoted personal adherents of James. When, however, the Rear Admiral was closeted, and required to promise that he would vote for the repeal of the Test Act, his answer was, that his honour and conscience would not permit him to give any such pledge. "Nobody doubts your honour," said the King; "but a man who lives as you do ought not to talk about his conscience." To this reproach, a reproach which came with a bad grace from the lover of Catharine Sedley, Herbert manfully replied, "I have my faults, sir: but I could name people who talk much more about conscience than I am in the habit of doing, and yet lead lives as loose as mine." He was dismissed from all his places; and the account of what he had disbursed

It is unsuccessful.

Admiral Herbert.

* Barillon, $\frac{\text{Feb. 26.}}{\text{March 10.}}$ 168$\frac{4}{5}$; Van Citters, Feb. $\frac{14}{24}$.; Reresby's Memoirs; Bonrepaux, $\frac{\text{May 25.}}{\text{June 4.}}$ 1687.

Digitized by Google

and received as Master of the Robes was scrutinised with great and, as he complained, with unjust severity.*

It was now evident that all hope of an alliance between the Churches of England and of Rome, for the purpose of sharing offices and emoluments, and of crushing the Puritan sects, must be abandoned. Nothing remained but to try a coalition between the Church of Rome and the Puritan sects against the Church of England.

On the eighteenth of March the King informed the Privy Council that he had determined to prorogue the Parliament till the end of November, and to grant, by his own authority, entire liberty of conscience to all his subjects.† On the fourth of April appeared the memorable Declaration of Indulgence.

Declaration of Indulgence.

In this Declaration the King avowed that it was his earnest wish to see his people members of that Church to which he himself belonged. But, since that could not be, he announced his intention to protect them in the free exercise of their religion. He repeated all those phrases which, eight years before, when he was himself an oppressed man, had been familiar to his lips, but which he had ceased to use from the day on which a turn of fortune had put it into his power to be an oppressor. He had long been convinced, he said, that conscience was not to be forced, that persecution was unfavourable to population and to trade, and that it never attained the ends which persecutors had in view. He repeated his promise, already often repeated and often violated, that he would protect the Established Church in the

* Barillon, March ¼. 1687; Lady Russell to Dr. Fitzwilliam, April 1.; Burnet, i. 671. 762. The conversation is somewhat differently related in the Life of James, ii. 204. But that passage is not part of the King's own memoirs.

† London Gazette, March 21. 1687.

Digitized by Google

enjoyment of her legal rights. He then proceeded to annul, by his own sole authority, a long series of statutes. He suspended all penal laws against all classes of Nonconformists. He authorised both Roman Catholics and Protestant Dissenters to perform their worship publicly. He forbade his subjects, on pain of his highest displeasure, to molest any religious assembly. He also abrogated all those Acts which imposed any religious test as a qualification for any civil or military office.*

That the Declaration of Indulgence was unconstitutional is a point on which both the great English parties have always been entirely agreed. Every person capable of reasoning on a political question must perceive that a monarch who is competent to issue such a Declaration is nothing less than an absolute monarch. Nor is it possible to urge in defence of this act of James those pleas by which many arbitrary acts of the Stuarts have been vindicated or excused. It cannot be said that he mistook the bounds of his prerogative because they had not been accurately ascertained. For the truth is that he trespassed with a recent landmark full in his view. Fifteen years before that time, a Declaration of Indulgence had been put forth by his brother with the advice of the Cabal. That Declaration, when compared with the Declaration of James, might be called modest and cautious. The Declaration of Charles dispensed only with penal laws. The Declaration of James dispensed also with all religious tests. The Declaration of Charles permitted the Roman Catholics to celebrate their worship in private dwellings only. Under the Declaration of James they might build and decorate temples, and even walk in procession along Fleet Street with crosses, images, and censers. Yet the Declaration of Charles had been

* London Gazette, April 7. 1687.

Digitized by Google

pronounced illegal in the most formal manner. The Commons had resolved that the King had no power to dispense with statutes in matters ecclesiastical. Charles had ordered the obnoxious instrument to be cancelled in his presence, had torn off the seal with his own hand, and had, both by message under his sign manual, and with his own lips from his throne in full Parliament, distinctly promised the two Houses that the step which had given so much offence should never be drawn into precedent. The two Houses had then, without one dissentient voice, joined in thanking him for this compliance with their wishes. No constitutional question had ever been decided more deliberately, more clearly, or with more harmonious consent.

The defenders of James have frequently pleaded in his excuse the judgment of the Court of King's Bench, on the information collusively laid against Sir Edward Hales: but the plea is of no value. That judgment James had notoriously obtained by solicitation, by threats, by dismissing scrupulous magistrates, and by placing on the bench other magistrates more courtly. And yet that judgment, though generally regarded by the bar and by the nation as unconstitutional, went only to this extent, that the Sovereign might, for special reasons of state, grant to individuals by name exemptions from disabling statutes. That he could by one sweeping edict authorise all his subjects to disobey whole volumes of laws, no tribunal had ventured, in the face of the solemn parliamentary decision of 1673, to affirm.

Such, however, was the position of parties that James's Declaration of Indulgence, though the most audacious of all the attacks made by the Stuarts on public freedom, was well calculated to please that very portion of the community by which all the other attacks of the Stuarts on public freedom had been most strenuously resisted.

Feeling of the Protestant Dissenters.

Digitized by Google

It could scarcely be hoped that the Protestant Nonconformist, separated from his countrymen by a harsh code harshly enforced, would be inclined to dispute the validity of a decree which relieved him from intolerable grievances. A cool and philosophical observer would undoubtedly have pronounced that all the evil arising from all the intolerant laws which Parliaments had framed was not to be compared to the evil which would be produced by a transfer of the legislative power from the Parliament to the Sovereign. But such coolness and philosophy are not to be expected from men who are smarting under present pain, and who are tempted by the offer of immediate ease. A Puritan divine might not indeed be able to deny that the dispensing power now claimed by the Crown was inconsistent with the fundamental principles of the constitution. But he might perhaps be excused if he asked, What was the constitution to him? The Act of Uniformity had ejected him, in spite of royal promises, from a benefice which was his freehold, and had reduced him to beggary and dependence. The Five Mile Act had banished him from his dwelling, from his relations, from his friends, from almost all places of public resort. Under the Conventicle Act his goods had been distrained; and he had been flung into one noisome gaol after another among highwaymen and housebreakers. Out of prison, he had constantly had the officers of justice on his track: he had been forced to pay hushmoney to informers: he had stolen, in ignominious disguises, through windows and trapdoors, to meet his flock, and had, while pouring the baptismal water, or distributing the eucharistic bread, been anxiously listening for the signal that the tipstaves were approaching. Was it not mockery to call on a man thus plundered and oppressed to suffer martyrdom for the property and liberty of his plunderers and oppressors? The Declaration, despotic as it might

Digitized by Google

seem to his prosperous neighbours, brought deliverance to him. He was called upon to make his choice, not between freedom and slavery, but between two yokes; and he might not unnaturally think the yoke of the King lighter than that of the Church.

While thoughts like these were working in the minds of many Dissenters, the Anglican party was in amazement and terror. This new turn in affairs was indeed alarming.

Feeling of the Church of England.

The House of Stuart leagued with republican and regicide sects against the old Cavaliers of England; Popery leagued with Puritanism against an ecclesiastical system with which the Puritans had no quarrel, except that it had retained too much that was Popish; these were portents which confounded all the calculations of statesmen. The Church was then to be attacked at once on every side; and the attack was to be under the direction of him who, by her constitution, was her head. She might well be struck with surprise and dismay. And mingled with surprise and dismay came other bitter feelings; resentment against the perjured Prince whom she had served too well, and remorse for the cruelties in which he had been her accomplice, and for which he was now, as it seemed, about to be her punisher. Her chastisement was just. She reaped that which she had sown. After the Restoration, when her power was at the height, she had breathed nothing but vengeance. She had encouraged, urged, almost compelled the Stuarts to requite with perfidious ingratitude the recent services of the Presbyterians. Had she, in that season of her prosperity, pleaded, as became her, for her enemies, she might now, in her distress, have found them her friends. Perhaps it was not yet too late. Perhaps she might still be able to turn the tactics of her faithless oppressor against himself. There was among the Anglican clergy a moderate party which had always felt kindly towards the Pro-

Digitized by Google

testant Dissenters. That party was not large; but the abilities, acquirements, and virtues of those who belonged to it made it respectable. It had been regarded with little favour by the highest ecclesiastical dignitaries, and had been mercilessly reviled by bigots of the school of Laud: but, from the day on which the Declaration of Indulgence appeared to the day on which the power of James ceased to inspire terror, the whole Church seemed to be animated by the spirit, and guided by the counsels, of the calumniated Latitudinarians.

The Court and the Church.

Then followed an auction, the strangest that history has recorded. On one side the King, on the other the Church, began to bid eagerly against each other for the favour of those whom up to that time King and Church had combined to oppress. The Protestant Dissenters, who, a few months before, had been a despised and proscribed class, now held the balance of power. The harshness with which they had been treated was universally condemned. The Court tried to throw all the blame on the hierarchy. The hierarchy flung it back on the Court. The King declared that he had unwillingly persecuted the separatists only because his affairs had been in such a state that he could not venture to disoblige the established clergy. The established clergy protested that they had borne a part in severity uncongenial to their feelings only from deference to the authority of the King. The King got together a collection of stories about rectors and vicars who had by threats of persecution wrung money out of Protestant Dissenters. He talked on this subject much and publicly: he threatened to institute an enquiry which would exhibit the parsons in their true character to the whole world; and he actually issued several commissions empowering agents on whom he thought that he could depend to ascertain the amount of the sums extorted in different parts of the country

Digitized by Google

by professors of the dominant religion from sectaries. The advocates of the Church, on the other hand, cited instances of honest parish priests who had been reprimanded and menaced by the Court for recommending toleration in the pulpit, and for refusing to spy out and hunt down little congregations of Nonconformists. The King asserted that some of the Churchmen whom he had closeted had offered to make large concessions to the Catholics, on condition that the persecution of the Puritans might go on. The accused Churchmen vehemently denied the truth of this charge, and alleged that, if they would have complied with what he demanded for his own religion, he would most gladly have suffered them to indemnify themselves by harassing and pillaging Protestant Dissenters.*

The Court had changed its face. The scarf and cassock could hardly appear there without calling forth sneers and malicious whispers. Maids of honour forebore to giggle, and Lords of the Bedchamber bowed low, when the Puritanical visage and the Puritanical garb, so long the favourite subjects of mockery in fashionable circles, were seen in the galleries. Taunton, which had been during two generations the stronghold of the Roundhead party in the West, which had twice resolutely repelled the armies of Charles the First, which had risen as one man to support Monmouth, and which had been turned into a shambles by Kirke and Jeffreys, seemed to have suddenly succeeded to the place which Oxford had

* Warrant Book of the Treasury. See particularly the instructions dated March 8. 168⅞. Burnet, i. 715.; Reflections on His Majesty's Proclamation for a Toleration in Scotland; Letters containing some Reflections on His Majesty's Declaration for Liberty of Conscience; Apology for the Church of England with relation to the spirit of Persecution for which she is accused, 168⅞. But it is impossible for me to cite all the pamphlets from which I have formed my notion of the state of parties at this time.

Digitized by Google

once occupied in the royal favour.* The King constrained himself to show even fawning courtesy to eminent Dissenters. To some he offered money, to some municipal honours, to some pardons for their relations and friends, who, having been implicated in the Rye House plot, or having joined the standard of Monmouth, were now wandering on the Continent, or toiling among the sugar canes of Barbadoes. He affected even to sympathise with the kindness which the English Puritans felt for their foreign brethren. A second and a third proclamation were published at Edinburgh, which greatly extended the nugatory toleration granted to the Presbyterians by the edict of February.† The banished Huguenots, on whom the King had frowned during many months, and whom he had defrauded of the alms contributed by the nation, were now relieved and caressed. An Order in Council was issued, appealing again in their behalf to the public liberality. The rule which required them to qualify themselves for the receipt of charity, by conforming to the Anglican worship, seems to have been at this time silently abrogated; and the defenders of the King's policy had the effrontery to affirm that this rule, which, as we know from the best evidence, was really devised by himself in concert with Barillon, had been adopted at the instance of the prelates of the Established Church.‡

While the King was thus courting his old adversaries, the friends of the Church were not less active. Of the acrimony and scorn with which prelates and priests had, since the Restoration, been in the habit of treating the sectaries scarcely a trace was discernible. Those who had lately been designated as schismatics and fanatics were now dear fellow Pro-

* Letter to a Dissenter.

† Wodrow, Appendix, vol. ii. Nos. 132. 134.

‡ London Gazette, April 21. 1687; Animadversions on a late paper entituled A Letter to a Dissenter, by H. C. (Henry Care), 1687.

Digitized by Google

testants, weak brethren it might be, but still brethren, whose scruples were entitled to tender regard. If they would but be true at this crisis to the cause of the English constitution and of the reformed religion, their generosity should be speedily and largely rewarded. They should have, instead of an indulgence which was of no legal validity, a real indulgence, secured by Act of Parliament. Nay, many churchmen, who had hitherto been distinguished by their inflexible attachment to every gesture and every word prescribed in the Book of Common Prayer, now declared themselves favourable, not only to toleration, but even to comprehension. The dispute, they said, about surplices and attitudes, had too long divided those who were agreed as to the essentials of religion. When the struggle for life and death against the common enemy was over, it would be found that the Anglican clergy would be ready to make every fair concession. If the Dissenters would demand only what was reasonable, not only civil but ecclesiastical dignities would be open to them; and Baxter and Howe would be able, without any stain on their honour or their conscience, to sit on the episcopal bench.

Letter to a Dissenter.

Of the numerous pamphlets in which the cause of the Court and the cause of the Church were at this time eagerly and anxiously pleaded before the Puritan, now, by a strange turn of fortune, the arbiter of the fate of his persecutors, one only is still remembered, the Letter to a Dissenter. In this masterly little tract, all the arguments which could convince a Nonconformist that it was his duty and his interest to prefer an alliance with the Church to an alliance with the Court, were condensed into the smallest compass, arranged in the most perspicuous order, illustrated with lively wit, and enforced by an eloquence earnest indeed, yet never in its utmost vehemence transgressing the

Digitized by Google

limits of exact good sense and good breeding. The effect of this paper was immense; for, as it was only a single sheet, more than twenty thousand copies were circulated by the post; and there was no corner of the kingdom in which the effect was not felt. Twenty four answers were published: but the town pronounced that they were all bad, and that Lestrange's was the worst of the twenty four.* The government was greatly irritated, and spared no pains to discover the author of the Letter: but it was found impossible to procure legal evidence against him. Some imagined that they recognised the sentiments and diction of Temple.† But in truth that amplitude and acuteness of intellect, that vivacity of fancy, that terse and energetic style, that placid dignity, half courtly half philosophical, which the utmost excitement of conflict could not for a moment derange, belonged to Halifax, and to Halifax alone.

Conduct of the Dissenters.

The Dissenters wavered; nor is it any reproach to them that they did so. They were suffering; and the King had given them relief. Some eminent pastors had emerged from confinement; and others had ventured to return from exile. Congregations, which had hitherto met only by stealth and in darkness, now assembled at noonday, and sang psalms aloud in the hearing of magistrates, churchwardens, and constables. Modest buildings for the worship of God after the Puritan fashion began to rise all over England. An observant traveller will still remark the date of 1687 on some of the oldest meeting houses. Nevertheless

* Lestrange's Answer to a Letter to a Dissenter; Care's Animadversions on A Letter to a Dissenter; Dialogue between Harry and Roger; that is to say, Harry Care and Roger Lestrange.

† The letter was signed T. W. Care says, in his Animadversions, "This Sir Politic T. W., or W. T.; for some critics think that the truer reading."

Digitized by Google

the offers of the Church were, to a prudent Dissenter, far more attractive than those of the King. The Declaration was, in the eye of the law, a nullity. It suspended the penal statutes against nonconformity only for so long a time as the fundamental principles of the constitution and the rightful authority of the legislature should remain suspended. What was the value of privileges which must be held by a tenure at once so ignominious and so insecure? There might soon be a demise of the crown. A sovereign attached to the established religion might sit on the throne. A Parliament composed of Churchmen might be assembled. How deplorable would then be the situation of Dissenters who had been in league with Jesuits against the constitution! The Church offered an indulgence very different from that granted by James, an indulgence as valid and as sacred as the Great Charter. Both the contending parties promised religious liberty to the separatist: but one party required him to purchase it by sacrificing civil liberty; the other party invited him to enjoy civil and religious liberty together.

For these reasons, even if it could have been believed that the Court was sincere, a Dissenter might reasonably have determined to cast in his lot with the Church. But what guarantee was there for the sincerity of the Court? All men knew what the conduct of James had been up to that very time. It was not impossible, indeed, that a persecutor might be convinced by argument and by experience of the advantages of toleration. But James did not pretend to have been recently convinced. On the contrary, he omitted no opportunity of protesting that he had, during many years, been, on principle, adverse to all intolerance. Yet, within a few months, he had persecuted men, women, young girls, to the death for their religion. Had he been acting against light and against the convictions of his conscience then?

Digitized by Google

Or was he uttering a deliberate falsehood now? From this dilemma there was no escape; and either of the two suppositions was fatal to the King's character for honesty. It was notorious also that he had been completely subjugated by the Jesuits. Only a few days before the publication of the Indulgence, that Order had been honoured, in spite of the well known wishes of the Holy See, with a new mark of his confidence and approbation. His confessor, Father Mansuete, a Franciscan, whose mild temper and irreproachable life commanded general respect, but who had long been hated by Tyrconnel and Petre, had been discarded. The vacant place had been filled by an Englishman named Warner, who had apostatised from the religion of his country and had turned Jesuit. To the moderate Roman Catholics and to the Nuncio this change was far from agreeable. By every Protestant it was regarded as a proof that the dominion of the Jesuits over the royal mind was absolute.* Whatever praises those fathers might justly claim, flattery itself could not ascribe to them either wide liberality or strict veracity. That they had never scrupled, when the interest of their Order was at stake, to call in the aid of the civil sword, or to violate the laws of truth and of good faith, had been proclaimed to the world not only by Protestant accusers, but by men whose virtue and genius were the glory of the Church of Rome. It was incredible that a devoted disciple of the Jesuits should be on principle zealous for freedom of conscience: but it was neither incredible nor improbable that he might think himself justified in disguising his real sentiments, in order to render a service to his religion. It was certain that the King

* Ellis Correspondence, March 15. July 27. 1686; Barillon, Feb. 28. Mar. 10., March $\frac{8}{18}$. $\frac{6}{16}$. 1687; Ronquillo, March $\frac{8}{18}$. 1687, in the Mackintosh Collection.

Digitized by Google

at heart preferred the Churchmen to the Puritans. It was certain that, while he had any hope of gaining the Churchmen, he had never shown the smallest kindness to the Puritans. Could it then be doubted that, if the Churchmen would even now comply with his wishes, he would willingly sacrifice the Puritans? His word, repeatedly pledged, had not restrained him from invading the legal rights of that clergy which had given such signal proofs of affection and fidelity to his house. What security then could his word afford to sects divided from him by the recollection of a thousand inexpiable wounds inflicted and endured?

Some of the Dissenters side with the Court.

When the first agitation produced by the publication of the Indulgence had subsided, it appeared that a breach had taken place in the Puritan party. The minority, headed by a few busy men whose judgment was defective or was biassed by interest, supported the King.

Care.

Henry Care, who had long been the bitterest and most active pamphleteer among the Nonconformists, and who had, in the days of the Popish plot, assailed James with the utmost fury in a weekly journal entitled the Packet of Advice from Rome, was now as loud in adulation as he had formerly been in calumny and insult.* The chief agent who was employed by the government to manage the Presbyterians was Vincent Alsop,

Alsop.

a divine of some note both as a preacher and as a writer. His son, who had incurred the penalties of treason, received a pardon; and the whole influence of the father was thus engaged on the side of the Court.† With Alsop was joined Thomas Rosewell.

* Wood's Athenæ Oxonienses; Observator; Heraclitus Ridens, *passim*. But Care's own writings furnish the best materials for an estimate of his character.

† Calamy's Account of the Ministers ejected or silenced after the Restoration in Northampton-

Digitized by Google

Rosewell.

Rosewell had, during that persecution of the Dissenters which followed the detection of the Rye House plot, been falsely accused of preaching against the government, had been tried for his life by Jeffreys, and had, in defiance of the clearest evidence, been convicted by a packed jury. The injustice of the verdict was so gross that the very courtiers cried shame. One Tory gentleman who had heard the trial went instantly to Charles, and declared that the neck of the most loyal subject in England would not be safe if Rosewell suffered. The jurymen themselves were stung by remorse when they thought over what they had done, and exerted themselves to save the life of the prisoner. At length a pardon was granted: but Rosewell remained bound under heavy recognisances to good behaviour during life, and to periodical appearance in the Court of King's Bench. His recognisances were now discharged by the royal command; and in this way his services were secured.*

Lobb.

The business of gaining the Independents was principally entrusted to one of their ministers named Stephen Lobb. Lobb was a weak, violent, and ambitious man. He had gone such lengths in opposition to the government, that he had been by name proscribed in several proclamations. He now made his peace, and went as far in servility as he had ever done in faction. He joined the Jesuitical cabal, and eagerly recommended measures from which the wisest and most honest Roman Catholics recoiled. It was remarked that he was constantly at the palace and frequently in the closet, that he lived with a splendour to which the Puritan divines were little accustomed, and that he was per-

shire; Wood's Athenæ Oxonienses; Biographia Britannica.

* State Trials; Samuel Rosewell's Life of Thomas Rosewell, 1718; Calamy's Account.

Digitized by Google

petually surrounded by suitors imploring his interest to procure them offices or pardons.*

With Lobb was closely connected William Penn. Penn had never been a strongheaded man: the life which he had been leading during two years had not a little impaired his moral sensibility; and if his conscience ever reproached him, he comforted himself by repeating that he had a good and noble end in view, and that he was not paid for his services in money. Penn.

By the influence of these men, and of others less conspicuous, addresses of thanks to the King were procured from several bodies of Dissenters. Tory writers have with justice remarked that the language of these compositions was as fulsomely servile as anything that could be found in the most florid eulogies pronounced by Bishops on the Stuarts. But, on close enquiry, it will appear that the disgrace belongs to but a small part of the Puritan party. There was scarcely a market town in England without at least a knot of separatists. No exertion was spared to induce them to express their gratitude for the Indulgence. Circular letters, imploring them to sign, were sent to every corner of the kingdom in such numbers that the mail bags, it was sportively said, were too heavy for the posthorses. Yet all the addresses which could be obtained from all the Presbyterians, Independents, and Baptists scattered over England did not in six months amount to sixty; nor is there any reason to believe that these addresses were numerously signed.† One of the most adulatory was that of the Quakers; and Penn presented it with a speech more adulatory still.‡

* London Gazette, March 15. 168§; Nichols's Defence of the Church of England; Pierce's Vindication of the Dissenters.

† The Addresses will be found in the London Gazettes.

‡ London Gazette, May 26. 1687; Life of Penn prefixed to his works, 1726.

Digitized by Google

The majority of the Puritans are against the Court.

The great body of Protestant Nonconformists, firmly attached to civil liberty, and distrusting the promises of the King and of the Jesuits, steadily refused to return thanks for a favour, which, it might well be suspected, concealed a snare. This was the temper of all the most illustrious chiefs of the party. One of these was Baxter. He had, as we have seen, been brought to trial soon after the accession of James, had been brutally insulted by Jeffreys, and had been convicted by a jury, such as the courtly Sheriffs of those times were in the habit of selecting. Baxter had been about a year and a half in prison when the Court began to think seriously of gaining the Nonconformists. He was not only set at liberty, but was informed that, if he chose to reside in London, he might do so without fearing that the Five Mile Act would be enforced against him. The government probably hoped that the recollection of past sufferings and the sense of present ease would produce the same effect on him as on Rosewell and Lobb. The hope was disappointed. Baxter was neither to be corrupted nor to be deceived. He refused to join in any address of thanks for the Indulgence, and exerted all his influence to promote good feeling between the Church and the Presbyterians.*

Baxter.

If any man stood higher than Baxter in the estimation of the Protestant Dissenters, that man was John Howe. Howe had, like Baxter, been personally a gainer by the recent change of policy. The same tyranny which had flung Baxter into gaol had driven Howe into banishment; and, soon after Baxter had been let out of the King's Bench Prison, Howe returned from Utrecht to England. It was expected at Whitehall that Howe would exert in favour of the Court all the authority which he possessed over his brethren. The King himself condescended to ask the help of the subject whom

Howe.

* Calamy's Life of Baxter.

Digitized by Google

he had oppressed. Howe appears to have hesitated: but the influence of the Hampdens, with whom he was on terms of close intimacy, kept him steady to the cause of the constitution. A meeting of Presbyterian ministers was held at his house, to consider the state of affairs, and to determine on the course to be adopted. There was great anxiety at the palace to know the result. Two royal messengers were in attendance during the discussion. They returned with the unwelcome news that Howe had declared himself decidedly adverse to the dispensing power, and that he had, after long debate, carried with him the majority of the assembly.*

Bunyan.

To the names of Baxter and Howe must be added the name of a man far below them in station and in acquired knowledge, but in virtue their equal, and in genius their superior, John Bunyan. Bunyan had been bred a tinker, and had served as a private soldier in the parliamentary army. Early in his life he had been fearfully tortured by remorse for his youthful sins, the worst of which seem, however, to have been such as the world thinks venial. His keen sensibility and his powerful imagination made his internal conflicts singularly terrible. He fancied that he was under sentence of reprobation, that he had committed blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, that he had sold Christ, that he was actually possessed by a demon. Sometimes loud voices from heaven cried out to warn him. Sometimes fiends whispered impious suggestions in his ear. He saw visions of distant mountain tops, on which the sun shone brightly, but from which he was separated by a waste of snow. He felt the Devil behind him pulling his clothes. He thought that the brand of Cain had been set upon him. He feared

* Calamy's Life of Howe. The share which the Hampden family had in the matter I learned from a letter of Johnstone of Warristoun, dated June 13. 1688.

Digitized by Google

that he was about to burst asunder like Judas. His mental agony disordered his health. One day he shook like a man in the palsy. On another day he felt a fire within his breast. It is difficult to understand how he survived sufferings so intense, and so long continued. At length the clouds broke. From the depths of despair, the penitent passed to a state of serene felicity. An irresistible impulse now urged him to impart to others the blessing of which he was himself possessed.* He joined the Baptists, and became a preacher and writer. His education had been that of a mechanic. He knew no language but the English, as it was spoken by the common people. He had studied no great model of composition, with the exception, an important exception undoubtedly, of our noble translation of the Bible. His spelling was bad. He frequently transgressed the rules of grammar. Yet his native force of genius, and his experimental knowledge of all the religious passions, from despair to ecstasy, amply supplied in him the want of learning. His rude oratory roused and melted hearers who listened without interest to the laboured discourses of great logicians and Hebraists. His books were widely circulated among the humbler classes. One of them, the Pilgrim's Progress, was, in his own lifetime, translated into several foreign languages. It was, however, scarcely known to the learned and polite, and had been, during more than a century, the delight of pious cottagers and artisans before it took its proper place, as a classical work, in libraries. At length critics condescended to enquire where the secret of so wide and so durable a popularity lay. They were compelled to own that the ignorant multitude had judged more correctly than the learned, and that the despised little book was really a masterpiece. Bunyan is indeed as decidedly the first of allegorists as Demosthenes is the first of orators, or Shakspeare the first of dramatists. Other allegorists

* Bunyan's Grace Abounding.

Digitized by Google

have shown equal ingenuity; but no other allegorist has ever been able to touch the heart, and to make abstractions objects of terror, of pity, and of love.*

It may be doubted whether any English Dissenter had suffered more severely under the penal laws than John Bunyan. Of the twenty seven years which had elapsed since the Restoration, he had passed twelve in confinement. He still persisted in preaching: but, that he might preach, he was under the necessity of disguising himself like a carter. He was often introduced into meetings through back doors, with a smock frock on his back, and a whip in his hand. If he had thought only of his own ease and safety, he would have hailed the Indulgence with delight. He was now, at length, free to pray and exhort in open day. His congregation rapidly increased: thousands hung upon his words; and at Bedford, where he ordinarily resided, money was plentifully contributed to build a meeting house for him. His influence among the common people was such that the government would willingly have bestowed on him some municipal office: but his vigorous understanding and his stout English heart were proof against all delusion and all temptation. He felt assured that the proffered toleration was merely a bait intended to lure the Puritan party to destruction; nor would he, by accepting a place for which he was not legally qualified, recognise the validity of the dispensing power. One of the last acts of his virtuous life was to decline an interview to which he was invited by an agent of the government.†

* Young classes Bunyan's prose with Durfey's poetry. The people of fashion in the Spiritual Quixote rank the Pilgrim's Progress with Jack the Giant-killer. Late in the eighteenth century Cowper did not venture to do more than allude to the great allegorist: —

"I name thee not, lest so despised a name
Should move a sneer at thy deserved fame."

† The continuation of Bunyan's Life appended to his Grace Abounding.

Digitized by Google

Kiffin.

Great as was the authority of Bunyan over the Baptists, that of William Kiffin was still greater. Kiffin was the first man among them in wealth and station. He was in the habit of exercising his spiritual gifts at their meetings: but he did not live by preaching. He traded largely: his credit on the Exchange of London stood high; and he had accumulated an ample fortune. Perhaps no man could, at that conjuncture, have rendered more valuable services to the Court. But between him and the Court was interposed the remembrance of one terrible event. He was the grandfather of the two Hewlings, those gallant youths who, of all the victims of the Bloody Assizes, had been the most generally lamented. For the sad fate of one of them James was in a peculiar manner responsible. Jeffreys had respited the younger brother. The poor lad's sister had been ushered by Churchill into the royal presence, and had begged for mercy: but the King's heart had been obdurate. The misery of the whole family had been great: but Kiffin was most to be pitied. He was seventy years old when he was left desolate, the survivor of those who should have survived him. The heartless and venal sycophants of Whitehall, judging by themselves, thought that the old man would be easily propitiated by an Alderman's gown, and by some compensation in money for the property which his grandsons had forfeited. Penn was employed in the work of seduction, but to no purpose.* The King determined to try what effect

* An attempt has been made to vindicate Penn's conduct on this occasion, and to fasten on me the charge of having calumniated him. It is asserted that, instead of being engaged, on behalf of the government, in the work of seduction, he was really engaged, on behalf of Kiffin, in the work of intercession. In support of this view the following passage is triumphantly quoted from Kiffin's Memoirs of himself. "I used all the means I could to be excused both by some lords near the King, and also by Sir Nicholas Butler, and Mr. Penn. But it was all in vain . . . ." There the quotation ends, not at a full stop, but at a semicolon. The remainder of the

Digitized by Google

his own civilities would produce. Kiffin was ordered to attend at the palace. He found a brilliant circle of noblemen and gentlemen assembled. James immediately came to him, spoke to him very graciously, and concluded by saying, "I have put you down, Mr. Kiffin, for an Alderman of London." The old man looked fixedly at the King, burst into tears, and made answer, "Sir, I am worn out. I am unfit to serve Your Majesty or the City. And, sir, the death of my poor boys broke my heart. That wound is as fresh as ever. I shall carry it to my grave." The King stood silent for a minute in some confusion, and then said, "Mr. Kiffin, I will find a balsam for that sore." Assuredly James did not mean to say anything cruel or insolent: on the contrary, he seems to have been in an unusually gentle mood. Yet no speech that is recorded of him gives so unfavourable a notion of his character as these few words. They are the words of a hardhearted and lowminded man, unable to conceive any laceration of the affections for which a place or a pension would not be a full compensation.*

Since Kiffin could not be seduced by blandishments and fair promises, it was determined to try what persecution would effect. He was told that an information would be filed against him in the Crown Office, and he was threatened with a lodging in Newgate. He asked the advice of counsel; and the answer which he received was that, by accepting office without taking the sacrament according to the Anglican

sentence, which fully bears out all that I have said, is carefully suppressed. Kiffin proceeds thus:—"I was told that they (Nicholas and Penn) knew I had an interest that might serve the King, and although they knew my sufferings were great, in cutting off my two grandchildren, and losing their estates, yet it should be made up to me, both in their estates, and also in what honour or advantage I could reasonably desire for myself. But I thank the Lord, these proffers were no snare to me."

* Kiffin's Memoirs; Luson's Letter to Brooke, May 11. 1773, in the Hughes Correspondence.

Digitized by Google

ritual, he would make himself legally liable to a fine of five hundred pounds, but that, by refusing office, he would make himself liable, not legally, but in fact, to whatever fine a servile bench of judges might, in direct defiance of the statutes, think fit to impose. He might be mulcted in ten, twenty, thirty, thousand pounds. His family, which had already suffered so cruelly from two confiscations, might be utterly ruined by this third calamity. After holding out many weeks, he so far submitted as to take the title of Alderman: but he abstained from acting either as a Justice of the Peace or as one of the Commission of Lieutenancy which commanded the militia of the City.*

That section of the dissenting body which was favourable to the King's new policy had from the first been a minority, and soon began to diminish. For the Nonconformists perceived in no long time that their spiritual privileges had been abridged rather than extended by the Indulgence. The chief characteristic of the Puritan was abhorrence of the peculiarities of the Church of Rome. He had quitted the Church of England only because he conceived that she too much resembled her superb and voluptuous sister, the sorceress of the golden cup and of the scarlet robe. He now found that one of the implied conditions of that alliance which some of his pastors had formed with the Court was that the religion of the Court should be respectfully and tenderly treated. He soon began to regret the days of persecution. While the penal laws were enforced, he had heard the words of life in secret and at his peril: but still he had heard them. When the brethren were assembled in the inner chamber, when the sentinels had been posted, when the doors had been locked, when the preacher, in the garb of a

* Kiffin's Memoirs.

Digitized by Google

butcher or a drayman, had come in over the tiles, then at least God was truly worshipped. No portion of divine truth was suppressed or softened down for any worldly object. All the distinctive doctrines of the Puritan theology were fully, and even coarsely, set forth. To the Church of Rome no quarter was given. The Beast, the Antichrist, the Man of Sin, the mystical Jezebel, the mystical Babylon, were the phrases ordinarily employed to describe that august and fascinating superstition. Such had been once the style of Alsop, of Lobb, of Rosewell, and of other ministers who had of late been well received at the palace: but such was now their style no longer. Divines who aspired to a high place in the King's favour and confidence could not venture to speak with asperity of the King's religion. Congregations therefore complained loudly that, since the appearance of the Declaration which purported to give them entire freedom of conscience, they had never once heard the Gospel boldly and faithfully preached. Formerly they had been forced to snatch their spiritual nutriment by stealth: but, when they had snatched it, they had found it seasoned exactly to their taste. They were now at liberty to feed: but their food had lost all its savour. They met by daylight, and in commodious edifices; but they heard discourses far less to their taste than they would have heard from the rector. At the parish church the will worship and idolatry of Rome were every Sunday attacked with energy: but, at the meeting house, the pastor, who had a few months before reviled the established clergy as little better than Papists, now carefully abstained from censuring Popery, or conveyed his censures in language too delicate to shock even the ears of Father Petre. Nor was it possible to assign any creditable reason for this change. The Roman Catholic doctrines had undergone no alteration. Within living memory, never

Digitized by Google

had Roman Catholic priests been so active in the work of making proselytes: never had so many Roman Catholic publications issued from the press: never had the attention of all who cared about religion been so closely fixed on the disputes between the Roman Catholics and the Protestants. What could be thought of the sincerity of theologians who had never been weary of railing at Popery when Popery was comparatively harmless and helpless, and who now, when a time of real danger to the reformed faith had arrived, studiously avoided uttering one word which could give offence to a Jesuit? Their conduct was indeed easily explained. It was known that some of them had obtained pardons. It was suspected that others had obtained money. Their prototype might be found in that weak apostle who from fear denied the Master to whom he had boastfully professed the firmest attachment, or in that baser apostle who sold his Lord for a handful of silver.*

Thus the dissenting ministers who had been gained by the Court were rapidly losing the influence which they had once possessed over their brethren. On the other hand, the sectaries found themselves attracted by a strong religious sympathy towards those prelates and priests of the Church of England who, in spite of royal mandates, of threats, and of promises, were waging vigorous war with the Church of Rome. The Anglican body and the Puritan body, so long separated by a mortal enmity, were daily drawing nearer to each other, and every step which they made towards union increased the influence of him who was their common head. William was in all things fitted to be a mediator between these two great sections of the English nation. He could not be said

* See, among other contemporary pamphlets, one entitled a Representation of the threatening Dangers impending over Protestants.

Digitized by Google

to be a member of either. Yet neither, when in a reasonable mood, could refuse to regard him as a friend. His system of theology agreed with that of the Puritans. At the same time, he regarded episcopacy, not indeed as a divine institution, but as a perfectly lawful and an eminently useful form of church government. Questions respecting postures, robes, festivals, and liturgies, he considered as of no vital importance. A simple worship, such as that to which he had been early accustomed, would have been most to his personal taste. But he was prepared to conform to any ritual which might be acceptable to the nation, and insisted only that he should not be required to persecute his brother Protestants whose consciences did not permit them to follow his example. Two years earlier he would have been pronounced by numerous bigots on both sides a mere Laodicean, neither cold nor hot, and fit only to be spewed out. But the zeal which had inflamed Churchmen against Dissenters and Dissenters against Churchmen had been so tempered by common adversity and danger that the lukewarmness which had once been imputed to him as a crime was now reckoned among his chief virtues.

The Prince and Princess of Orange hostile to the Declaration of Indulgence.

All men were anxious to know what he thought of the Declaration of Indulgence. For a time hopes were entertained at Whitehall that his known respect for the rights of conscience would at least prevent him from publicly expressing disapprobation of a policy which had a specious show of liberality. Penn had visited Holland in the summer of 1686, confident that his eloquence, of which he had a high opinion, would prove irresistible. He had harangued on his favourite theme with a copiousness which tired his hearers out. He had assured them that a golden age of religious liberty was approaching: whoever lived three years longer would see strange things he could not

Digitized by Google

be mistaken; for he had it from a man who had it from an Angel. Penn also hinted that, though he had not come to the Hague with a royal commission, he knew the royal mind. There was nothing, he was confident, which the uncle would not do to gratify the nephew, if only the nephew would, in the matter of the Test Act, gratify the uncle. As oral exhortations and promises produced little effect, Penn returned to England, and thence wrote to the Hague that His Majesty seemed disposed to make large concessions, to live in close amity with the Prince, and to settle a handsome income on the Princess.* There can indeed be little doubt that James would gladly have purchased at a high price the support of his eldest daughter and of his son in law. But, on the subject of the Test, William's resolution was immutable. "You ask me," he said to one of the King's agents, "to countenance an attack on my own religion. I cannot with a safe conscience do it, and I will not, no, not for the crown of England, nor for the empire of the world." These words were reported to the King and disturbed him greatly.† He wrote urgent letters with his own hand. Sometimes he took the tone of an injured man. He was the head of the royal family: he was as such entitled to expect the obedience of the younger branches; and it was very hard that he was to be crossed in a matter on which his heart was set. At other times a bait which was thought irresistible was offered. If

* Burnet, i. 693, 694.; Avaux, Jan. 10. 1687. Penn's letters were regularly put, by one of his Quaker friends who resided at the Hague, into the Prince's own hand.

† "Le Prince d'Orange, qui avoit éludé jusqu'alors de faire une réponse positive, dit'. . . . . qu'il ne consentiroit jamais à la suppression de ces loix qui avoient été établies pour le maintien et la sureté de la religion Protestante, et que sa conscience ne le lui permettoit point, non seulement pour la succession du royaume d'Angleterre, mais même pour l'empire du monde; en sorte que le roi d'Angleterre est plus aigri contre lui qu'il n'a jamais été."—Bonrepaux, June $\frac{14}{24}$. 1687.

Digitized by Google

William would but give way on this one point, the English government would, in return, cooperate with him strenuously against France. He was not to be so deluded. He knew that James, without the support of a Parliament, would, even if not unwilling, be unable to render effectual service to the common cause of Europe; and there could be no doubt that, if a Parliament were assembled, the first demand of both Houses would be that the Declaration should be cancelled.

The Princess assented to all that was suggested by her husband. Their joint opinion was conveyed to the King in firm but temperate terms. They declared that they deeply regretted the course which His Majesty had adopted. They were convinced that he had usurped a prerogative which did not by law belong to him. Against that usurpation they protested, not only as friends to civil liberty, but as members of the royal house, who had a deep interest in maintaining the rights of that crown which they might one day wear. For experience had shown that in England arbitrary government could not fail to produce a reaction even more pernicious than itself; and it might reasonably be feared that the nation, alarmed and incensed by the prospect of despotism, might conceive a disgust even for constitutional monarchy. The advice, therefore, which they tendered to the King was that he would in all things govern according to law. They readily admitted that the law might with advantage be altered by competent authority, and that some part of his Declaration well deserved to be embodied in an Act of Parliament. They were not persecutors. They should with pleasure see Roman Catholics as well as Protestant Dissenters relieved in a proper manner from all penal statutes. They should with pleasure see Protestant Dissenters admitted in a proper manner to civil office. At that point their Highnesses

Digitized by Google

must stop. They could not but entertain grave apprehensions that, if Roman Catholics were made capable of public trust, great evil would ensue; and it was intimated not obscurely that these apprehensions arose chiefly from the conduct of James.*

Their views respecting the English Roman Catholics vindicated.

The opinion expressed by the Prince and Princess respecting the disabilities to which the Roman Catholics were subject was that of almost all the statesmen and philosophers who were then zealous for political and religious freedom. In our age, on the contrary, enlightened men have often pronounced, with regret, that, on this one point, William appears to disadvantage when compared with his father in law. The truth is that some considerations which are necessary to the forming of a correct judgment seem to have escaped the notice of many writers of the nineteenth century.

There are two opposite errors into which those who study the annals of our country are in constant danger of falling, the error of judging the present by the past, and the error of judging the past by the present. The former is the error of minds prone to reverence whatever is old, the latter of minds readily attracted by whatever is new. The former error may perpetually be observed in the reasonings of conservative politicians on the questions of their own day. The latter error perpetually infects the speculations of writers of the liberal school when they discuss the transactions of an earlier age. The former error is the more pernicious in a statesman, and the latter in a historian.

It is not easy for any person who, in our time, undertakes to treat of the revolution which overthrew the Stuarts, to preserve with steadiness the happy mean between these two extremes. The question

* Burnet, i. 710.; Bonrepaux, $\frac{\text{May } 24.}{\text{June } 4.}$ 1687.

Digitized by Google

whether members of the Roman Catholic Church could be safely admitted to Parliament and to office convulsed our country during the reign of James the Second, was set at rest by his downfall, and, having slept during more than a century, was revived by that great stirring of the human mind which followed the meeting of the National Assembly of France. During thirty years the contest went on in both Houses of Parliament, in every constituent body, in every social circle. It destroyed administrations, broke up parties, made all government in one part of the empire impossible, and at length brought us to the verge of civil war. Even when the struggle had terminated, the passions to which it had given birth still continued to rage. It was scarcely possible for any man whose mind was under the influence of those passions to see the events of the years 1687 and 1688 in a perfectly correct light.

One class of politicians, starting from the true proposition that the Revolution had been a great blessing to our country, arrived at the false conclusion that no test which the statesmen of the Revolution had thought necessary for the protection of our religion and our freedom could be safely abolished. Another class, starting from the true proposition that the disabilities imposed on the Roman Catholics had long been productive of nothing but mischief, arrived at the false conclusion that there never could have been a time when those disabilities were useful and necessary. The former fallacy pervaded the speeches of the acute and learned Eldon. The latter was not altogether without influence even on an intellect so calm and philosophical as that of Mackintosh.

Perhaps, however, it will be found on examination that we may vindicate the course which was unanimously approved by all the great English statesmen of the seventeenth century, without questioning the wisdom of the course which was as unanimously ap-

Digitized by Google

proved by all the great English statesmen of our own time.

Undoubtedly it is an evil that any citizen should be excluded from civil employment on account of his religious opinions: but a choice between evils is sometimes all that is left to human wisdom. A nation may be placed in such a situation that the majority must either impose disabilities or submit to them, and that what would, under ordinary circumstances, be justly condemned as persecution, may fall within the bounds of legitimate selfdefence; and such was in the year 1687 the situation of England.

According to the constitution of the realm, James possessed the right of naming almost all public functionaries, political, judicial, ecclesiastical, military, and naval. In the exercise of this right he was not, as our sovereigns now are, under the necessity of acting in conformity with the advice of ministers approved by the House of Commons. It was evident therefore that, unless he were strictly bound by law to bestow office on none but Protestants, it would be in his power to bestow office on none but Roman Catholics. The Roman Catholics were few in number; and among them was not a single man whose services could be seriously missed by the commonwealth. The proportion which they bore to the population of England was very much smaller than at present. For at present a constant stream of emigration runs from Ireland to our great towns: but in the seventeenth century there was not even in London an Irish colony. More than forty nine fiftieths of the inhabitants of the kingdom, more than forty nine fiftieths of the property of the kingdom, almost all the political, legal, and military ability and knowledge to be found in the kingdom, were Protestant. Nevertheless the King, under a strong infatuation, had determined to use his vast patronage as a means of making proselytes. To be of his Church was, in

Digitized by Google

his view, the first of all qualifications for office. To be of the national Church was a positive disqualification. He reprobated, it is true, in language which has been applauded by some credulous friends of religious liberty, the monstrous injustice of that test which excluded a small minority of the nation from public trust: but he was at the same time instituting a test which excluded the majority. He thought it hard that a man who was a good financier and a loyal subject should be excluded from the post of Lord Treasurer merely for being a Papist. But he had himself turned out a Lord Treasurer whom he admitted to be a good financier and a loyal subject merely for being a Protestant. He had repeatedly and distinctly declared his resolution never to put the white staff in the hands of any heretic. With many other great offices of state he had dealt in the same way. Already the Lord President, the Lord Privy Seal, the Lord Chamberlain, the Groom of the Stole, the First Lord of the Treasury, the Principal Secretary of State, the Lord High Commissioner of Scotland, the Chancellor of Scotland, the Secretary of Scotland, were, or pretended to be, Roman Catholics. Most of these functionaries had been bred Churchmen, and had been guilty of apostasy, open or secret, in order to obtain or to keep their high places. Every Protestant who still held an important post in the government held it in constant uncertainty and fear. It would be endless to recount the situations of a lower rank which were filled by the favoured class. Roman Catholics already swarmed in every department of the public service. They were Lords Lieutenants, Deputy Lieutenants, Judges, Justices of the Peace, Commissioners of the Customs, Envoys to foreign courts, Colonels of regiments, Governors of fortresses. The share which in a few months they had obtained of the temporal patronage of the crown was much more

Digitized by Google

than ten times as great as they would have had under an impartial system. Yet this was not the worst. They were made rulers of the Church of England. Men who had assured the King that they held his faith sate in the High Commission, and exercised supreme jurisdiction in spiritual things over all the prelates and priests of the established religion. Ecclesiastical benefices of great dignity had been bestowed, some on avowed Papists, and some on half concealed Papists. And all this had been done while the laws against Popery were still unrepealed, and while James had still a strong interest in affecting respect for the rights of conscience. What then was his conduct likely to be, if his subjects consented to free him, by a legislative act, from even the shadow of restraint? Is it possible to doubt that Protestants would have been as effectually excluded from employment, by a strictly legal use of the royal prerogative, as ever Roman Catholics had been by Act of Parliament?

How obstinately James was determined to bestow on the members of his own Church a share of patronage altogether out of proportion to their numbers and importance is proved by the instructions which, in exile and old age, he drew up for the guidance of his son. It is impossible to read without mingled pity and derision those effusions of a mind on which all the discipline of experience and adversity had been exhausted in vain. The Pretender is advised, if ever he should reign in England, to make a partition of offices, and carefully to reserve for the members of the Church of Rome a portion which might have sufficed for them if they had been one half instead of one fiftieth part of the nation. One Secretary of State, one Commissioner of the Treasury, the Secretary at War, the majority of the great dignitaries of the household, the majority of the officers of the army, are always to be Catholics. Such were the designs of James after his perverse bigotry had

Digitized by Google

drawn on him a punishment which had appalled the whole world. Is it then possible to doubt what his conduct would have been if his people, deluded by the empty name of religious liberty, had suffered him to proceed without any check?

Even Penn, intemperate and undiscerning as was his zeal for the Declaration, seems to have felt that the partiality with which honours and emoluments were heaped on Roman Catholics might not unnaturally excite the jealousy of the nation. He owned that, if the Test Act were repealed, the Protestants were entitled to an equivalent, and went so far as to suggest several equivalents. During some weeks the word equivalent, then lately imported from France, was in the mouths of all the coffeehouse orators; but at length a few pages of keen logic and polished sarcasm written by Halifax put an end to these idle projects. One of Penn's schemes was that a law should be passed dividing the patronage of the crown into three equal parts, and that to one only of those parts members of the Church of Rome should be admitted. Even under such an arrangement the members of the Church of Rome would have obtained near twenty times their fair portion of official appointments; and yet there is no reason to believe that even to such an arrangement the King would have consented. But, had he consented, what guarantee could he give that he would adhere to his bargain? The dilemma propounded by Halifax was unanswerable. If laws are binding on you, observe the law which now exists. If laws are not binding on you, it is idle to offer us a law as a security.*

It is clear, therefore, that the point at issue was not whether secular offices should be thrown open to all sects indifferently. While James was King it was inevitable that there should be exclusion; and

* Johnstone, Jan. 13. 1688; Halifax's Anatomy of an Equivalent.

Digitized by Google

the only question was who should be excluded, Papists or Protestants, the few or the many, a hundred thousand Englishmen or five millions.

Such are the weighty arguments by which the conduct of the Prince of Orange towards the English Roman Catholics may be reconciled with the principles of religious liberty. These arguments, it will be observed, have no reference to any part of the Roman Catholic theology. It will also be observed that they ceased to have any force when the crown had been settled on a race of Protestant sovereigns, and when the power of the House of Commons in the state had become so decidedly preponderant that no sovereign, whatever might have been his opinions or his inclinations, could have imitated the example of James. The nation, however, after its terrors, its struggles, its narrow escape, was in a suspicious and vindictive mood. Means of defence therefore which necessity had once justified, and which necessity alone could justify, were obstinately used long after the necessity had ceased to exist, and were not abandoned till vulgar prejudice had maintained a contest of many years against reason. But in the time of James reason and vulgar prejudice were on the same side. The fanatical and ignorant wished to exclude the Roman Catholic from office because he worshipped stocks and stones, because he had the mark of the Beast, because he had burned down London, because he had strangled Sir Edmondsbury Godfrey; and the most judicious and tolerant statesman, while smiling at the delusions which imposed on the populace, was led, by a very different road, to the same conclusion.

The great object of William now was to unite in one body the numerous sections of the community which regarded him as their common head. In this work he had several able and trusty coadjutors, among whom two were preeminently useful, Burnet and Dykvelt.

Digitized by Google

The services of Burnet indeed it was necessary to employ with some caution. The kindness with which he had been welcomed at the Hague had excited the rage of James. Mary received from her father two letters filled with invectives against the insolent and seditious divine whom she protected. But these accusations had so little effect on her that she sent back answers dictated by Burnet himself. At length, in January 1687, the King had recourse to stronger measures. Skelton, who had represented the English government in the United Provinces, was removed to Paris, and was succeeded by Albeville, the weakest and basest of all the members of the Jesuitical cabal. Money was Albeville's one object; and he took it from all who offered it. He was paid at once by France and by Holland. Nay, he stooped below even the miserable dignity of corruption, and accepted bribes so small that they seemed better suited to a porter or a lacquey than to an Envoy who had been honoured with an English baronetcy and a foreign marquisate. On one occasion he pocketed very complacently a gratuity of fifty pistoles as the price of a service which he had rendered to the States General. This man had it in charge to demand that Burnet should no longer be countenanced at the Hague. William, who was not inclined to part with a valuable friend, answered at first with his usual coldness; "I am not aware, sir, that, since the Doctor has been here, he has done or said anything of which His Majesty can justly complain." But James was peremptory: the time for an open rupture had not arrived; and it was necessary to give way. During more than eighteen months Burnet never came into the presence of either the Prince or the Princess: but he resided near them: he was fully informed of all that was passing: his advice was constantly asked: his pen was employed on all important occasions; and

Enmity of James to Burnet.

Digitized by Google

many of the sharpest and most effective tracts which about that time appeared in London were justly attributed to him.

The rage of James flamed high. He had always been more than sufficiently prone to the angry passions. But none of his enemies, not even those who had conspired against his life, not even those who had attempted by perjury to load him with the guilt of treason and assassination, had ever been regarded by him with such animosity as he now felt for Burnet. His Majesty railed daily at the Doctor in unkingly language, and meditated plans of unlawful revenge. Even blood would not slake that frantic hatred. The insolent divine must be tortured before he was permitted to die. Fortunately he was by birth a Scot; and in Scotland, before he was gibbeted in the Grass-market, his legs might be dislocated in the boot. Proceedings were accordingly instituted against him at Edinburgh: but he had been naturalised in Holland: he had married a woman of fortune who was a native of that province; and it was certain that his adopted country would not deliver him up. It was therefore determined to kidnap him. Ruffians were hired with great sums of money to perform this perilous and infamous service. An order for three thousand pounds on this account was actually drawn up for signature in the office of the Secretary of State. Lewis was apprised of the design, and took a warm interest in it. He would lend, he said, his best assistance to convey the villain to England, and would undertake that the ministers of the vengeance of James should find a secure asylum in France. Burnet was well aware of his danger: but timidity was not among his faults. He published a courageous answer to the charges which had been brought against him at Edinburgh. He knew, he said, that it was intended to execute him without a trial: but his trust was in the King of Kings, to whom inno-

Digitized by Google

cent blood would not cry in vain, even against the mightiest princes of the earth. He gave a farewell dinner to some friends, and, after the meal, took solemn leave of them, as a man who was doomed to death, and with whom they could no longer safely converse. Nevertheless he continued to show himself in all the public places of the Hague so boldly that his friends reproached him bitterly with his foolhardiness.*

Mission of Dykvelt to England.

While Burnet was William's secretary for English affairs in Holland, Dykvelt had been not less usefully employed in London. Dykvelt was one of a remarkable class of public men who, having been bred to politics in the noble school of John De Witt, had, after the fall of that great minister, thought that they should best discharge their duty to the commonwealth by rallying round the Prince of Orange. Of the diplomatists in the service of the United Provinces none was, in dexterity, temper, and manners, superior to Dykvelt. In knowledge of English affairs none seems to have been his

* Burnet, i. 726—731.; Answer to the Criminal Letters issued out against Dr. Burnet; Avaux Neg., July $\frac{7}{17}$., $\frac{14}{24}$., $\frac{\text{July 28.}}{\text{Aug. 7.}}$ 1687, Jan. $\frac{18}{28}$. 1688; Lewis to Barillon, $\frac{\text{Dec. 30. 1687.}}{\text{Jan. 9. 1688.}}$; Johnstone of Waristoun, Feb. 21. 1688; Lady Russell to Dr. Fitzwilliam, Oct. 5. 1687. As it has been suspected that Burnet, who certainly was not in the habit of underrating his own importance, exaggerated the danger to which he was exposed, I will give the words of Lewis and of Johnstone. "Qui que ce soit," says Lewis, "qui entreprenne de l'enlever en Hollande trouvera non seulement une retraite assurée et une entière protection dans mes états, mais aussi toute l'assistance qu'il pourra désirer pour faire conduire surement ce scélérat en Angleterre." "The business of Bamfield (Burnet) is certainly true," says Johnstone. "No man doubts of it here, and some concerned do not deny it. His friends say they hear he takes no care of himself, but out of vanity, to show his courage, shows his folly; so that, if ill happen on it, all people will laugh at it. Pray tell him so much from Jones (Johnstone). If some could be catched making their coup d'essai on him, it will do much to frighten them from making any attempt on Ogle (the Prince)."

Digitized by Google

equal. A pretence was found for despatching him, early in the year 1687, to England on a special mission with credentials from the States General. But in truth his embassy was not to the government, but to the opposition; and his conduct was guided by private instructions which had been drawn by Burnet, and approved by William.*

Negotiations of Dykvelt with English statesmen.

Dykvelt reported that James was bitterly mortified by the conduct of the Prince and Princess. "My nephew's duty," said the King, "is to strengthen my hands. But he has always taken a pleasure in crossing me." Dykvelt answered that in matters of private concern His Highness had shown, and was ready to show, the greatest deference to the King's wishes; but that it was scarcely reasonable to expect the aid of a Protestant prince against the Protestant religion.† The King was silenced, but not appeased. He saw, with ill humour which he could not disguise, that Dykvelt was mustering and drilling all the various divisions of the opposition with a skill which would have been creditable to the ablest English statesman, and which was marvellous in a foreigner. The clergy were told that they would find the Prince a friend to episcopacy and to the Book of Common Prayer. The Nonconformists were encouraged to expect from him, not only toleration, but also comprehension. Even the Roman Catholics were conciliated; and some of the most respectable among them declared, to the King's face, that they were satisfied with what Dykvelt proposed, and that they would rather have a toleration, secured by statute, than an illegal and precarious ascendency.‡ The chiefs of all the im-

* Burnet, i. 708.; Avaux Neg., Jan. $\frac{3}{13}$. Feb. $\frac{6}{16}$. 1687; Van Kampen, Karakterkunde der Vaderlandsche Geschiedenis.

† Burnet, i. 711. Dykvelt's despatches to the States General contain, as far as I have seen or can learn, not a word about the real object of his mission. His correspondence with the Prince of Orange was strictly private.

‡ Bonrepaux, Sept. $\frac{14}{24}$. 1687.

Digitized by Google

portant sections of the nation had frequent conferences in the presence of the dexterous Envoy. At these meetings the sense of the Tory party was chiefly spoken by the Earls of Danby and Nottingham. Though more than eight years had elapsed since Danby had fallen from power, his name was still great among the old Cavaliers of England; and many even of those Whigs who had formerly persecuted him were now disposed to admit that he had suffered for faults not his own, and that his zeal for the prerogative, though it had often misled him, had been tempered by two feelings which did him honour, zeal for the established religion, and zeal for the dignity and independence of his country. He was also highly esteemed at the Hague, where it was never forgotten that he was the person who, in spite of the influence of France and of the Papists, had induced Charles to bestow the hand of the Lady Mary on her cousin.

Danby.

Daniel Finch, Earl of Nottingham, a nobleman whose name will frequently recur in the history of three eventful reigns, sprang from a family of unrivalled forensic eminence. One of his kinsmen had borne the seal of Charles the First, had prostituted eminent parts and learning to evil purposes, and had been pursued by the vengeance of the Commons of England with Falkland at their head. A more honourable renown had in the succeeding generation been obtained by Heneage Finch. He had immediately after the Restoration been appointed Solicitor General. He had subsequently risen to be Attorney General, Lord Keeper, Lord Chancellor, Baron Finch, and Earl of Nottingham. Through this prosperous career he had always held the prerogative as high as he honestly or decently could; but he had never been concerned in any machinations against the fundamental laws of the realm. In the midst of a corrupt court he had

Nottingham.

Digitized by Google

kept his personal integrity unsullied. He had enjoyed high fame as an orator, though his diction, formed on models anterior to the civil wars, was, towards the close of his life, pronounced stiff and pedantic by the wits of the rising generation. In Westminster Hall he is still mentioned with respect as the man who first educed out of the chaos anciently called by the name of equity a new system of jurisprudence, as regular and complete as that which is administered by the Judges of the Common Law.* A considerable part of the moral and intellectual character of this great magistrate had descended with the title of Nottingham to his eldest son. This son, Earl Daniel, was an honourable and virtuous man. Though enslaved by some absurd prejudices, and though liable to strange fits of caprice, he cannot be accused of having deviated from the path of right in search either of unlawful gain or of unlawful pleasure. Like his father he was a distinguished speaker, impressive but prolix, and too monotonously solemn. The person of the orator was in perfect harmony with his oratory. His attitude was rigidly erect: his complexion was so dark that he might have passed for a native of a warmer climate than ours; and his harsh features were composed to an expression resembling that of a chief mourner at a funeral. It was commonly said that he looked rather like a Spanish Grandee than like an English gentleman. The nicknames of Dismal, Don Dismallo, and Don Diego, were fastened on him by jesters, and are not yet forgotten. He had paid much attention to the science by which his family had been raised to greatness, and was, for a man born to rank and wealth, wonderfully well read in the laws of his country. He was a devoted son of the Church, and showed his respect for her in two

* See Lord Campbell's Life of him.

Digitized by Google

ways not usual among those Lords who in his time boasted that they were her especial friends, by writing tracts in defence of her dogmas, and by shaping his private life according to her precepts. Like other zealous churchmen, he had, till recently, been a strenuous supporter of monarchical authority. But to the policy which had been pursued since the suppression of the Western insurrection he was bitterly hostile, and not the less so because his younger brother Heneage had been turned out of the office of Solicitor General for refusing to defend the King's dispensing power.*

Halifax.

With these two great Tory Earls was now united Halifax, the accomplished chief of the Trimmers. Over the mind of Nottingham indeed Halifax appears to have had at this time a great ascendency. Between Halifax and Danby there was an enmity which began in the court of Charles, and which, at a later period, disturbed the court of William, but which, like many other enmities, remained suspended during the tyranny of James. The foes frequently met in the councils held by Dykvelt, and agreed in expressing dislike of the policy of the government and reverence for the Prince of Orange. The different characters of the two statesmen appeared strongly in their dealings with the Dutch envoy. Halifax showed an admirable talent for disquisition, but shrank from coming to any bold and irrevocable decision. Danby, far less subtle and eloquent, displayed more energy, resolution, and practical sagacity.

Devonshire.

Several eminent Whigs were in constant communication with Dykvelt: but the heads of the great houses of Cavendish and Russell could not take quite so active and prominent a part as might have been expected from their station and

* Johnstone's Correspondence; Mackay's Memoirs; Arbuthnot's John Bull; Swift's writings from 1710 to 1714, *passim*; Whiston's Letter to the Earl of Nottingham and the Earl's answer

Digitized by Google

their opinions. The fame and fortunes of Devonshire were at that moment under a cloud. He had an unfortunate quarrel with the Court, arising, not from a public and honourable cause, but from a private brawl in which even his warmest friends could not pronounce him altogether blameless. He had gone to Whitehall to pay his duty, and had there been insulted by a man named Colepepper, one of a set of bravoes who infested the purlieus of the court, and attempted to curry favour with the government by affronting members of the opposition. The King himself expressed great indignation at the manner in which one of his most distinguished peers had been treated under the royal roof; and Devonshire was pacified by an intimation that the offender should never again be admitted into the palace. The interdict, however, was soon taken off. The Earl's resentment revived. His servants took up his cause. Hostilities such as seemed to belong to a ruder age disturbed the streets of Westminster. The time of the Privy Council was occupied by the criminations and recriminations of the adverse parties. Colepepper's wife declared that she and her husband went in danger of their lives, and that their house had been assaulted by ruffians in the Cavendish livery. Devonshire replied that he had been fired at from Colepepper's windows. This was vehemently denied. A pistol, it was owned, loaded with gunpowder, had been discharged. But this had been done in a moment of terror merely for the purpose of alarming the Guards. While this feud was at the height the Earl met Colepepper in the drawingroom at Whitehall, and fancied that he saw triumph and defiance in the bully's countenance. Nothing unseemly passed in the royal sight; but, as soon as the enemies had left the presence chamber, Devonshire proposed that they should instantly decide their dispute with their swords. This challenge was refused. Then the high

Digitized by Google

spirited peer forgot the respect which he owed to the place where he stood and to his own character, and struck Colepepper in the face with a cane. All classes agreed in condemning this act as most indiscreet and indecent; nor could Devonshire himself, when he had cooled, think of it without vexation and shame. The government, however, with its usual folly, treated him so severely that in a short time the public sympathy was all on his side. A criminal information was filed in the King's Bench. The defendant took his stand on the privileges of the peerage; but on this point a decision was promptly given against him nor is it possible to deny that the decision, whether it were or were not according to the technical rules of English law, was in strict conformity with the great principles on which all laws ought to be framed. Nothing was then left to him but to plead guilty. The tribunal had, by successive dismissions, been reduced to such complete subjection, that the government which had instituted the prosecution was allowed to prescribe the punishment. The Judges waited in a body on Jeffreys, who insisted that they should impose a fine of not less than thirty thousand pounds. Thirty thousand pounds, when compared with the revenues of the English grandees of that age, may be considered as equivalent to a hundred and fifty thousand pounds in the nineteenth century. In the presence of the Chancellor not a word of disapprobation was uttered: but, when the Judges had retired, Sir John Powell, in whom all the little honesty of the bench was concentrated, muttered that the proposed penalty was enormous, and that one tenth part would be amply sufficient. His brethren did not agree with him; nor did he, on this occasion, show the courage by which, on a memorable day some months later, he signally retrieved his fame. The Earl was accordingly condemned to a fine of thirty thousand pounds, and to imprisonment

Digitized by Google

till payment should be made. Such a sum could not then be raised at a day's notice even by the greatest of the nobility. The sentence of imprisonment, however, was more easily pronounced than executed. Devonshire had retired to Chatsworth, where he was employed in turning the old Gothic mansion of his family into an edifice worthy of Palladio. The Peak was in those days almost as rude a district as Connemara now is, and the Sheriff found, or pretended, that it was difficult to arrest the lord of so wild a region in the midst of a devoted household and tenantry. Some days were thus gained: but at last both the Earl and the Sheriff were lodged in prison. Meanwhile a crowd of intercessors exerted their influence. The story ran that the Countess Dowager of Devonshire had obtained admittance to the royal closet, that she had reminded James how her brother in law, the gallant Charles Cavendish, had fallen at Gainsborough fighting for the crown, and that she had produced notes, written by Charles the First and Charles the Second, in acknowledgment of great sums lent by her Lord during the civil troubles. Those loans had never been repaid, and, with the interest, amounted, it was said, to more even than the immense fine which the Court of King's Bench had imposed. There was another consideration which seems to have had more weight with the King than the memory of former services. It might be necessary to call a Parliament. Whenever that event took place it was believed that Devonshire would bring a writ of error. The point on which he meant to appeal from the judgment of the King's Bench related to the privileges of peerage. The tribunal before which the appeal must come was the House of Peers. On such an occasion the Court could not be certain of the support even of the most courtly nobles. There was little doubt that the sentence would be annulled, and that, by grasping at too much, the government

Digitized by Google

would lose all. James was therefore disposed to a compromise. Devonshire was informed that, if he would give a bond for the whole fine, and thus preclude himself from the advantage which he might derive from a writ of error, he should be set at liberty. Whether the bond should be enforced or not would depend on his subsequent conduct. If he would support the dispensing power nothing would be exacted from him. If he was bent on popularity he must pay thirty thousand pounds for it. He refused, during some time, to consent to these terms: but confinement was insupportable to him. He signed the bond, and was let out of prison: but, though he consented to lay this heavy burden on his estate, nothing could induce him to promise that he would abandon his principles and his party. He was still entrusted with all the secrets of the opposition: but during some months his political friends thought it best for himself and for the good cause that he should remain in the background.*

The Earl of Bedford had never recovered from the effects of the great calamity which, four years before, had almost broken his heart. From private as well as from public feelings he was adverse to the Court: but he was not active in concerting measures against it. His place in the meetings of the malecontents was supplied by his nephew. This was the celebrated Edward Russell, a man of undoubted courage and capacity, but of loose principles and turbulent temper. He was a sailor, had

Edward Russell

* Kennet's funeral sermon on the Duke of Devonshire, and Memoirs of the family of Cavendish; State Trials; Privy Council Book, March 5. 168$\frac{6}{7}$; Barillon, $\frac{\text{June 30.}}{\text{July 10.}}$ 1687; Johnstone, Dec. $\frac{8}{18}$. 1687; Lords' Journals, May 6. 1689. "Ses amis et ses proches," says Barillon, "lui conseillent de prendre le bon parti, mais il persiste jusqu'à présent à ne se point soumettre. S'il vouloit se bien conduire et renoncer à être populaire il ne payeroit pas l'amende, mais s'il opiniâtre, il lui en coûtera trente mille pièces et il demeurera prisonnier jusqu'à l'actuel payement."

Digitized by Google

distinguished himself in his profession, and had in the late reign held an office in the palace. But all the ties which bound him to the royal family had been sundered by the death of his cousin William. The daring, unquiet, and vindictive seaman now sate in the councils called by the Dutch envoy as the representative of the boldest and most eager section of the opposition, of those men who, under the names of Roundheads, Exclusionists, and Whigs, had maintained with various fortune a contest of five and forty years against three successive Kings. This party, lately prostrate and almost extinct, but now again full of life and rapidly rising to ascendency, was troubled by none of the scruples which still impeded the movements of Tories and Trimmers, and was prepared to draw the sword against the tyrant on the first day on which the sword could be drawn with reasonable hope of success.

Three men are yet to be mentioned with whom Dykvelt was in confidential communication, and by whose help he hoped to secure the good will of three great professions. Bishop Compton was the agent employed to manage the clergy: Admiral Herbert undertook to exert all his influence over the navy; and an interest was established in the army by the instrumentality of Churchill.

Compton.

Herbert.

The conduct of Compton and Herbert requires no explanation. Having, in all things secular, served the crown with zeal and fidelity, they had incurred the royal displeasure by refusing to be employed as tools for the destruction of their own religion. Both of them had learned by experience how soon James forgot obligations, and how bitterly he remembered what it pleased him to consider as wrongs. The Bishop had by an illegal sentence been suspended from his episcopal functions. The Admiral had in one hour been reduced from opulence to penury.

Digitized by Google

The situation of Churchill was widely different. He had been raised by the royal bounty from obscurity to eminence, and from poverty to wealth. Having started in life a needy ensign, he was now, in his thirty-seventh year, a Major General, a peer of Scotland, a peer of England: he commanded a troop of Life Guards: he had been appointed to several honourable and lucrative offices; and as yet there was no sign that he had lost any part of the favour to which he owed so much. He was bound to James, not only by the common obligations of allegiance, but by military honour, by personal gratitude, and, as appeared to superficial observers, by the strongest ties of interest. But Churchill himself was no superficial observer. He knew exactly what his interest really was. If his master were once at full liberty to employ Papists, not a single Protestant would be employed. For a time a few highly favoured servants of the crown might possibly be exempted from the general proscription in the hope that they would be induced to change their religion. But even these would, after a short respite, fall one by one, as Rochester had already fallen. Churchill might indeed secure himself from this danger, and might raise himself still higher in the royal favour, by conforming to the Church of Rome; and it might seem that one who was not less distinguished by avarice and baseness than by capacity and valour was not likely to be shocked at the thought of hearing a mass. But so inconsistent is human nature that there are tender spots even in seared consciences. And thus this man, who had owed his rise to his sister's dishonour, who had been kept by the most profuse, imperious, and shameless of harlots, and whose public life, to those who can look steadily through the dazzling blaze of genius and glory, will appear a prodigy of turpitude, believed implicitly in the religion which he had learned as a boy, and

Churchill.

Digitized by Google

shuddered at the thought of formally abjuring it. A terrible alternative was before him. The earthly evil which he most dreaded was poverty. The one crime from which his heart recoiled was apostasy. And, if the designs of the Court succeeded, he could not doubt that between poverty and apostasy he must soon make his choice. He therefore determined to cross those designs; and it soon appeared that there was no guilt and no disgrace which he was not ready to incur, in order to escape from the necessity of parting either with his places or with his religion.*

Lady Churchill and the Princess Anne.

It was not only as a military commander, high in rank, and distinguished by skill and courage, that Churchill was able to render services to the opposition. It was, if not absolutely essential, yet most important, to the success of William's plans that his sister in law, who, in the order of succession to the English throne, stood between his wife and himself, should act in cordial union with him. All his difficulties would have been greatly augmented if Anne had declared herself favourable to the Indulgence. Which side she might take depended on the will of others. For her understanding was sluggish; and, though there was latent in her character a hereditary wilfulness and stubbornness which, many years later, great power and great provocations developed, she was as yet a willing slave to a nature far more vivacious and imperious than her own. The person by whom she was absolutely governed was the wife of Churchill, a

* The motive which determined the conduct of the Churchills is shortly and plainly set forth in the Duchess of Marlborough's Vindication. "It was," she says, "evident to all the world that, as things were carried on by King James, everybody sooner or later must be ruined, who would not become a Roman Catholic. This consideration made me very well pleased at the Prince of Orange's undertaking to rescue us from such slavery."

Digitized by Google

woman who afterwards exercised a great influence on the fate of England and of Europe.

The name of this celebrated favourite was Sarah Jennings. Her elder sister, Frances, had been distinguished by beauty and levity even among the crowd of beautiful faces and light characters which adorned and disgraced Whitehall during the wild carnival of the Restoration. On one occasion Frances dressed herself like an orange girl and cried fruit about the streets.* Sober people predicted that a girl of so little discretion and delicacy would not easily find a husband. She was however twice married, and was now the wife of Tyrconnel. Sarah, less regularly beautiful, was perhaps more attractive. Her face was expressive: her form wanted no feminine charm; and the profusion of her fine hair, not yet disguised by powder according to that barbarous fashion which she lived to see introduced, was the delight of numerous admirers. Among the gallants who sued for her favour, Colonel Churchill, young, handsome, graceful, insinuating, eloquent, and brave, obtained the preference. He must have been enamoured indeed. For he had little property except the annuity which he had bought with the infamous wages bestowed on him by the Duchess of Cleveland: he was insatiable of riches: Sarah was poor; and a plain girl with a large fortune was proposed to him. His love, after a struggle, prevailed over his avarice: marriage only strengthened his passion; and, to the last hour of his life, Sarah enjoyed the pleasure and distinction of being the one human being who was able to mislead that farsighted and surefooted judgment, who was fervently loved by that cold heart, and who was servilely feared by that intrepid spirit.

In a worldly sense the fidelity of Churchill's love

* Grammont's Memoirs; Pepys's Diary, Feb. 21. 1683.

Digitized by Google

was amply rewarded. His bride, though slenderly portioned, brought with her a dowry which, judiciously employed, made him at length a Duke of England, a Prince of the Empire, the captain general of a great coalition, the arbiter between mighty princes, and, what he valued more, the wealthiest subject in Europe. She had been brought up from childhood with the Princess Anne; and a close friendship had arisen between the girls. In character they resembled each other very little. Anne was slow and taciturn. To those whom she loved she was meek. The form which her anger assumed was sullenness. She had a strong sense of religion, and was attached even with bigotry to the rites and government of the Church of England. Sarah was lively and voluble, domineered over those whom she regarded with most kindness, and, when she was offended, vented her rage in tears and tempestuous reproaches. To sanctity she made no pretence, and, indeed, narrowly escaped the imputation of irreligion. She was not yet what she became when one class of vices had been fully developed in her by prosperity, and another by adversity, when her brain had been turned by success and flattery, when her heart had been ulcerated by disasters and mortifications. She lived to be that most odious and miserable of human beings, an ancient crone at war with her whole kind, at war with her own children and grandchildren, great indeed and rich, but valuing greatness and riches chiefly because they enabled her to brave public opinion, and to indulge without restraint her hatred to the living and the dead. In the reign of James she was regarded as nothing worse than a fine highspirited young woman, who could now and then be cross and arbitrary, but whose flaws of temper might well be pardoned in consideration of her charms.

It is a common observation that differences of taste,

Digitized by Google

understanding, and disposition, are no impediments to friendship, and that the closest intimacies often exist between minds each of which supplies what is wanting to the other. Lady Churchill was loved and even worshipped by Anne. The Princess could not live apart from the object of her romantic fondness. She married, and was a faithful and even an affectionate wife. But Prince George, a dull man whose chief pleasures were derived from his dinner and his bottle, acquired over her no influence comparable to that exercised by her female friend, and soon gave himself up with stupid patience to the dominion of the vehement and commanding spirit by which his wife was governed. Children were born to the royal pair; and Anne was by no means without the feelings of a mother. But the tenderness which she felt for her offspring was languid when compared with her devotion to the companion of her early years. At length the Princess became impatient of the restraint which etiquette imposed on her. She could not bear to hear the words Madam and Royal Highness from the lips of one who was more to her than a sister. Such words were indeed necessary in the gallery or the drawingroom: but they were disused in the closet. Anne was Mrs. Morley: Lady Churchill was Mrs. Freeman; and under these childish names was carried on during twenty years a correspondence on which at last the fate of administrations and dynasties depended. But as yet Anne had no political power and little patronage. Her friend attended her as first Lady of the Bedchamber, with a salary of only four hundred pounds a year. There is reason, however, to believe that, even at this time, Churchill was able to gratify his ruling passion by means of his wife's influence. The Princess, though her income was large and her tastes simple, contracted debts which her father, not without some murmurs, discharged; and it was rumoured that her

Digitized by Google

embarrassments had been caused by her prodigal bounty to her favourite.*

At length the time had arrived when this singular friendship was to exercise a great influence on public affairs. What part Anne would take in the contest which distracted England was matter of deep anxiety. Filial duty was on one side; and the interests of the religion to which she was sincerely attached were on the other. A less inert nature might well have remained long in suspense when drawn in opposite directions by motives so strong and so respectable. But the influence of the Churchills decided the question; and their patroness became an important member of that extensive league of which the Prince of Orange was the head.

Dykvelt returns to the Hague

In June 1687 Dykvelt returned to the Hague. He presented to the States General a royal epistle filled with eulogies of his conduct during his residence in London. These eulogies however were merely formal. James, in private communications written with his own hand, bitterly complained that the Envoy had lived in close intimacy with the most factious men in the realm, and had encouraged them in all their evil purposes. Dykvelt carried with him also a packet of letters from the most eminent of those with whom he had conferred during his stay in England. The writers generally expressed unbounded reverence and affection for William, and referred him to the bearer for fuller information as to their views. Halifax discussed the state and prospects of the country with his usual subtlety and vivacity, but took care not to pledge himself to any perilous line of conduct. Danby wrote in a bolder and more deter-

with letters from many eminent Englishmen.

* It would be endless to recount all the books from which I have formed my estimate of the duchess's character. Her own letters, her own Vindication, and the replies which it called forth, have been my chief materials.

Digitized by Google

mined tone, and could not refrain from slily sneering at the fears and scruples of his accomplished rival. But the most remarkable letter was from Churchill. It was written with that natural eloquence which, illiterate as he was, he never wanted on great occasions, and with that air of magnanimity which, perfidious as he was, he could with singular dexterity assume. The Princess Anne, he said, had commanded him to assure her illustrious relatives at the Hague that she was fully resolved by God's help rather to lose her life than to be guilty of apostasy. As for himself, his places and the royal favour were as nothing to him in comparison with his religion. He concluded by declaring in lofty language that, though he could not pretend to have lived the life of a saint, he should be found ready, on occasion, to die the death of a martyr.*

Zulestein's mission.

Dykvelt's mission had succeeded so well that a pretence was soon found for sending another agent to continue the work which had been so auspiciously commenced. The new Envoy, afterwards the founder of a noble English house which became extinct in our own time, was an illegitimate cousin german of William; and bore a title taken from the lordship of Zulestein. Zulestein's relationship to the House of Orange gave him importance in the public eye. His bearing was that of a gallant soldier. He was indeed in diplomatic talents and knowledge far inferior to Dykvelt: but even this inferiority had its advantages. A military man, who had never appeared to trouble himself about political affairs, could, without exciting any suspicion, hold with the English aristocracy an intercourse which, if he had been a noted master of statecraft, would have been jealously watched. Zulestein,

* The formal epistle which Dykvelt carried back to the States is in the Archives at the Hague. The other letters mentioned in this paragraph are given by Dalrymple; Appendix to Book V.

Digitized by Google

after a short absence, returned to his country charged with letters and verbal messages not less important than those which had been entrusted to his predecessor. A regular correspondence was from this time established between the Prince and the opposition. Agents of various ranks passed and repassed between the Thames and the Hague. Among these a Scotchman, of some parts and great activity, named Johnstone, was the most useful. He was cousin to Burnet, and son of an eminent covenanter who had, soon after the Restoration, been put to death for treason, and who was honoured by his party as a martyr.

Growing enmity between James and William.

The estrangement between the King of England and the Prince of Orange became daily more complete. A serious dispute had arisen concerning the six British regiments which were in the pay of the United Provinces. The King wished to put these regiments under the command of Roman Catholic officers. The Prince resolutely opposed this design. The King had recourse to his favourite commonplaces about toleration. The Prince replied that he only followed His Majesty's example. It was notorious that loyal and able men had been turned out of office in England merely for being Protestants. It was then surely competent to the Stadtholder and the States General to withhold high public trusts from Papists. This answer provoked James to such a degree that, in his rage, he lost sight of veracity and common sense. It was false, he vehemently said, that he had ever turned out any body on religious grounds. And if he had, what was that to the Prince or to the States? Were they his masters? Were they to sit in judgment on the conduct of foreign sovereigns? From that time he became desirous to recall his subjects who were in the Dutch service. By bringing them over to England he should, he conceived, at once strengthen himself, and weaken

Digitized by Google

his worst enemies. But there were financial difficulties which it was impossible for him to overlook. The number of troops already in his pay was as great as his revenue, though large beyond all precedent, and though parsimoniously administered, would support. If the battalions now in Holland were added to the existing establishment, the Treasury would be bankrupt. Perhaps Lewis might be induced to take them into his service. They would in that case be removed from a country where they were exposed to the corrupting influence of a republican government and a Calvinistic worship, and would be placed in a country where none ventured to dispute the mandates of the sovereign or the doctrines of the true Church. The soldiers would soon unlearn every political and religious heresy. Their native prince might always, at short notice, command their help, and would, on any emergency, be able to rely on their fidelity.

A negotiation on this subject was opened between Whitehall and Versailles. Lewis had as many soldiers as he wanted; and, had it been otherwise, he would not have been disposed to take Englishmen into his service; for the pay of England, low as it must seem to our generation, was much higher than the pay of France. At the same time, it was a great object to deprive William of so fine a brigade. After some weeks of correspondence, Barillon was authorised to promise that, if James would recall the British troops from Holland, Lewis would bear the charge of supporting two thousand of them in England. This offer was accepted by James with warm expressions of gratitude. Having made these arrangements, he requested the States General to send back the six regiments. The States General, completely governed by William, answered that such a demand, in such circumstances, was not authorised by the existing treaties, and positively refused to comply. It is re-

Digitized by Google

markable that Amsterdam, which had voted for keeping these troops in Holland when James needed their help against the Western insurgents, now contended vehemently that his request ought to be granted. On both occasions, the sole object of those who ruled that great city was to cross the Prince of Orange.*

Influence of the Dutch press.

The Dutch arms, however, were scarcely so formidable to James as the Dutch presses. English books and pamphlets against his government were daily printed at the Hague; nor could any vigilance prevent copies from being smuggled, by tens of thousands, into the counties bordering on the German Ocean. Among these publications, one was distinguished by its importance, and by the immense effect which it produced. The opinion which the Prince and Princess of Orange held respecting the Indulgence was well known to all who were conversant with public affairs. But, as no official announcement of that opinion had appeared, many persons who had not access to good private sources of information were deceived or perplexed by the confidence with which the partisans of the Court asserted that their Highnesses approved of the King's late acts. To contradict those assertions publicly would have been a simple and obvious course, if the sole object of William had been to strengthen his interest in England. But he considered England chiefly as an instrument necessary to the execution of his great European design. Towards that design he hoped to obtain the cooperation of both branches of the House of Austria, of the Italian princes, and even of the Sovereign Pontiff. There was reason to fear that any declaration which was satisfactory to

* Sunderland to William, Aug. 24. 1686; William to Sunderland, Sept. $\frac{3}{13}$. 1686; Barillon, May $\frac{6}{16}$. $\frac{\text{May 26.}}{\text{June 5.}}$, Oct. $\frac{3}{13}$., $\frac{\text{Nov. 28.}}{\text{Dec. 8.}}$ 1687; Lewis to Barillon, Oct. $\frac{14}{24}$. 1687; Memorial of Albeville, Dec. $\frac{15}{25}$. 1687; James to William, Jan. 17., Feb 16., March 2. 13. 1688; Avaux Neg., March $\frac{1}{11}$. $\frac{6}{16}$. $\frac{8}{18}$. $\frac{\text{March 22.}}{\text{April 1.}}$ 1688.

Digitized by Google

British Protestants would excite alarm and disgust at Madrid, Vienna, Turin, and Rome. For this reason the Prince long abstained from formally expressing his sentiments. At length it was represented to him that his continued silence had excited much uneasiness and distrust among his wellwishers, and that it was time to speak out. He therefore determined to explain himself.

Correspondence of Stewart and Fagel.

A Scotch Whig, named James Stewart, had fled, some years before, to Holland, in order to avoid the boot and the gallows, and had become intimate with the Grand Pensionary Fagel, who enjoyed a large share of the Stadtholder's confidence and favour. By Stewart had been drawn up the violent and acrimonious manifesto of Argyle. When the Indulgence appeared, Stewart conceived that he had an opportunity of obtaining, not only pardon, but reward. He offered his services to the government of which he had been the enemy: they were accepted; and he addressed to Fagel a letter, purporting to have been written by the direction of James. In that letter the Pensionary was exhorted to use all his influence with the Prince and Princess, for the purpose of inducing them to support their father's policy. After some delay Fagel transmitted a reply, deeply meditated, and drawn up with exquisite art. No person who studies that remarkable document can fail to perceive that, though it is framed in a manner well calculated to reassure and delight English Protestants, it contains not a word which could give offence, even at the Vatican. It was announced that William and Mary would, with pleasure, assist in abolishing every law which made any Englishman liable to punishment for his religious opinions. But between punishments and disabilities a distinction was taken. To admit Roman Catholics to office would, in the judgment of their Highnesses, be neither for the

Digitized by Google

general interest of England nor even for the interest of the Roman Catholics themselves. This manifesto was translated into several languages, and circulated widely on the Continent. Of the English version, carefully prepared by Burnet, near fifty thousand copies were introduced into the eastern shires, and rapidly distributed over the whole kingdom. No state paper was ever more completely successful. The Protestants of our island applauded the manly firmness with which William declared that he could not consent to entrust Papists with any share in the government. The Roman Catholic princes, on the other hand, were pleased by the mild and temperate style in which his resolution was expressed, and by the hope which he held out that, under his administration, no member of their Church would be molested on account of religion.

Castelmaine's embassy to Rome.

It is probable that the Pope himself was among those who read this celebrated letter with pleasure. He had some months before dismissed Castelmaine in a manner which showed little regard for the feelings of Castelmaine's master. Innocent thoroughly disliked the whole domestic and foreign policy of the English government. He saw that the unjust and impolitic measures of the Jesuitical cabal were far more likely to make the penal laws perpetual than to bring about an abolition of the test. His quarrel with the court of Versailles was every day becoming more and more serious; nor could he, either in his character of temporal prince or in his character of Sovereign Pontiff, feel cordial friendship for a vassal of that court. Castelmaine was ill qualified to remove these disgusts. He was indeed well acquainted with Rome, and was, for a layman, deeply read in theological controversy.* But he had none of the

* Adda, Nov. $\frac{9}{19}$. 1685.

Digitized by Google

address which his post required; and, even had he been a diplomatist of the greatest ability, there was a circumstance which would have disqualified him for the particular mission on which he had been sent. He was known all over Europe as the husband of the most shameless of women; and he was known in no other way. It was impossible to speak to him or of him without remembering in what manner the very title by which he was called had been acquired. This circumstance would have mattered little if he had been accredited to some dissolute court, such as that in which the Marchioness of Montespan had lately been dominant. But there was an obvious impropriety in sending him on an embassy rather of a spiritual than of a secular nature to a pontiff of primitive austerity. The Protestants all over Europe sneered; and Innocent, already unfavourably disposed to the English government, considered the compliment which had been paid him, at so much risk and at so heavy a cost, as little better than an affront. The salary of the Ambassador was fixed at a hundred pounds a week. Castelmaine complained that this was too little. Thrice the sum, he said, would hardly suffice. For at Rome the ministers of all the great Continental powers exerted themselves to surpass one another in splendour, under the eyes of a people whom the habit of seeing magnificent buildings, decorations, and ceremonies had made fastidious. He always declared that he had been a loser by his mission. He was accompanied by several young gentlemen of the best Roman Catholic families in England, Ratcliffes, Arundells and Tichbornes. At Rome he was lodged in the palace of the house of Pamfili on the south of the stately Place of Navona. He was early admitted to a private interview with Innocent: but the public audience was long delayed. Indeed Castelmaine's preparations for that great occasion were so sump-

Digitized by Google

tuous that, though commenced at Easter 1686, they were not complete till the following November; and in November the Pope had, or pretended to have, an attack of gout which caused another postponement. In January 1687, at length, the solemn introduction and homage were performed with unusual pomp. The state coaches, which had been built at Rome for the pageant, were so superb that they were thought worthy to be transmitted to posterity in fine engravings and to be celebrated by poets in several languages.* The front of the Ambassador's palace was decorated on this great day with absurd allegorical paintings of gigantic size. There was Saint George with his foot on the neck of Titus Oates, and Hercules with his club crushing College, the Protestant joiner, who in vain attempted to defend himself with his flail. After this public appearance Castelmaine invited all the persons of note then assembled at Rome to a banquet in that gay and splendid gallery which is adorned with paintings of subjects from the Æneid by Peter of Cortona. The whole city crowded to the show; and it was with difficulty that a company of Swiss guards could keep order among the spectators. The nobles of the Pontifical state in return gave costly entertainments to the Ambassador; and poets and wits were employed to lavish on him and on his master insipid and hyperbolical adulation such as flourishes most when genius and taste are in the deepest decay. Foremost among

* The Professor of Greek in the College De Propaganda Fide expressed his admiration in some detestable hexameters and pentameters, of which the following specimen may suffice: —

Ῥωγερίου δὴ σκεψόμενος λαμπροῖο θρίαμβον,
ὦκα μάλ' ἤϊσσεν καὶ θέεν ὄχλος ἅπας·
θαυμάζουσα δὲ τὴν πομπὴν, παγχρύσεά τ' αὐτοῦ
ἅρματα, τοὺς θ' ἵππους, τοίαδε Ῥώμη ἔφη.

The Latin verses are a little better. Nahum Tate responded in English:

"His glorious train and passing pomp to view,
A pomp that even to Rome itself was new,
Each age, each sex, the Latian turrets filled,
Each age and sex in tears of joy distilled."

Digitized by Google

the flatterers was a crowned head. More than thirty years had elapsed since Christina, the daughter of the great Gustavus, had voluntarily descended from the Swedish throne. After long wanderings, in the course of which she had committed many follies and crimes, she had finally taken up her abode at Rome, where she busied herself with astrological calculations and with the intrigues of the conclave, and amused herself with pictures, gems, manuscripts, and medals. She now composed some Italian stanzas in honour of the English prince, who, sprung, like herself, from a race of Kings heretofore regarded as the champions of the Reformation, had, like herself, been reconciled to the ancient Church. A splendid assembly met in her palace. Her verses, set to music, were sung with universal applause: and one of her literary dependents pronounced an oration on the same subject in a style so florid that it seems to have offended the taste of the English hearers. The Jesuits, hostile to the Pope, devoted to the interests of France, and disposed to pay every honour to James, received the English embassy with the utmost pomp in that princely house where the remains of Ignatius Loyola lie enshrined in lazulite and gold. Sculpture, painting, poetry, and eloquence were employed to compliment the strangers: but all these arts had sunk into deep degeneracy. There was a great display of turgid and impure Latinity unworthy of so erudite an order; and some of the inscriptions which adorned the walls had a fault more serious than even a bad style. It was said in one place that James had sent his brother as his messenger to heaven, and in another that James had furnished the wings with which his brother had soared to a higher region. There was a still more unfortunate distich, which at the time attracted little notice, but which, a few months later, was remembered and malignantly interpreted. "O King,

Digitized by Google

said the poet, "cease to sigh for a son. Though nature may refuse your wish, the stars will find a way to grant it."

In the midst of these festivities Castelmaine had to suffer cruel mortifications and humiliations. The Pope treated him with extreme coldness and reserve. As often as the Ambassador pressed for an answer to the request which he had been instructed to make in favour of Petre, Innocent was taken with a violent fit of coughing, which put an end to the conversation. The fame of these singular audiences spread over Rome. Pasquin was not silent. All the curious and tattling population of the idlest of cities, the Jesuits and the prelates of the French faction only excepted, laughed at Castelmaine's discomfiture. His temper, naturally unamiable, was soon exasperated to violence; and he circulated a memorial reflecting on the Pope. He had now put himself in the wrong. The sagacious Italian had got the advantage, and took care to keep it. He positively declared that the rule which excluded Jesuits from ecclesiastical preferment should not be relaxed in favour of Father Petre. Castelmaine, much provoked, threatened to leave Rome. Innocent replied, with a meek impertinence which was the more provoking because it could scarcely be distinguished from simplicity, that His Excellency might go if he liked. "But if we must lose him," added the venerable Pontiff, "I hope that he will take care of his health on the road. English people do not know how dangerous it is in this country to travel in the heat of the day. The best way is to start before dawn, and to take some rest at noon." With this salutary advice, and with a string of beads, the unfortunate Ambassador was dismissed. In a few months appeared, both in the Italian and in the English tongue, a pompous history of the mission, magnificently printed in folio, and illustrated

Digitized by Google

with plates. The frontispiece, to the great scandal of all Protestants, represented Castelmaine, in the robes of a Peer, with his coronet in his hand, kissing the toe of Innocent.*

* Correspondence of James and Innocent, in the British Museum; Burnet, i. 703—705.; Welwood's Memoirs; Commons' Journals, Oct. 28. 1689; An Account of his Excellency Roger Earl of Castelmaine's Embassy, by Michael Wright, chief steward of His Excellency's house at Rome, 1688.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

INDEX

TO

THE SECOND VOLUME.

Abingdon, James Bertie, Earl of, 172.
Adda, Ferdinand, Count of, Papal Nuncio in England, 274. Advocates moderation, 307. and note.
Addison, Joseph, 55. note.
Albemarle, Christopher Monk, Duke of; marches against Monmouth; his retreat, 157. Proclaimed a traitor by Monmouth, 167.
Albeville (White), Marquess of, 302. His meanness and corruption, 503.
Alford, Gregory, Mayor of Lyme; gives the alarm of Monmouth's landing, 157.
Alleine, Joseph, 164.
Alsop, Vincent, a Nonconformist of the Court party, 481.
Amsterdam, meeting of British exiles at, 118. The authorities connive at Argyle's expedition, 126. Opposes William of Orange, 524.
Anne Hyde, Duchess of York, Talbot's slanders against, 302.
Anne, Princess, afterwards Queen; her attachment to the Duchess of Marlborough, 520.
Arches, Court of, 345.
Archidiaconal Courts, 345.
Argyle, Marquess of, 114.
Argyle, Archibald Campbell, Earl of; son of the above, 113. Sentenced to death, 114. Escapes to Holland, 115. His power, 116. Appointed commander of expedition to Scotland, 120. Lands in Scotland, 128. His proclamation; raises his clan, 129. His plan of campaign; thwarted by his followers, 130—133. Marches on Glasgow, 134. His troops dispersed, 135. Taken prisoner, 137. His fortitude, 138, 139. His last sayings, 141. His execution, 142.
Articles, Lords of, 377.
Arundell, Lord, of Wardour, 301. Made a Privy Councillor, 340. Lord Privy Seal, 416.
Athol, John Murray, Marquess of; opposes Argyle, 133. Devastates Argyleshire, 146.
Atterbury, Francis, 364.
Avaux, Count of, French envoy at the Hague, 444.
Augsburgh, Treaty of, 448.
Aylesbury, Earl of; his account of Charles II.'s death, 13. note. His offer to James II., 283.
Ayloffe, John, 102. His execution, 146.

Badminton, household at, 172.
Barillon, French ambassador; his part in procuring a Romish priest to confess Charles II., 9. His letter to Lewis XIV., 45. note. Tries to embroil James II. with Parliament, 275. His report of Mordaunt's speech, 287. note. Assists Roman Catholic faction in the Court, 305. His account of England (1686), 367. His interview with Rochester, 408. Informs Lewis XIV. of James II.'s intentions towards the Dissenters, 465.

Digitized by Google

Bateman, trial and execution of, 250.
Bath, John Granville, Earl of; at Charles II.'s deathbed, 11.
Battiscombe, Christopher, executed, 227.
Baxter, Richard; his moderation, 65. Proceedings against; Jeffreys' behaviour to, 66, 67. His conviction and sentence, 68, 69. Liberated; refuses to be a tool of the Court, 484.
Beaufort, Henry Somerset, Duke of, 171. Commands in Bristol against Monmouth, 176.
Bedford, Earl of, 513.
Bedfordshire, contested election for (1685), 53.
Bedloe; his death, 56.
Bellasyse, John, Lord, a moderate Roman Catholic, 300. Made Privy Councillor, 340. Made First Lord of Treasury, 416.
Bentinck, William (afterwards Duke of Portland); his fidelity to William III., 427. His mission to England, 446.
Berkeley, Lady Henrietta, 105.
Blake, Robert; his defence of Taunton, 163.
Bloody Assizes, 223—231.
"Boilman, Tom," 213.
Bonrepaux, French agent; his ability, 305. His low estimate of James II., 307.
Bridport, skirmish at, 155.
Bristol, threatened by Monmouth, 175.
Brown, John, murdered by Graham of Claverhouse, 74.
Bryce, John, military execution of, 75.
Buccleuch, Dukes of, 210.
Buckinghamshire, contested election for (1685), 53, 54.
Bunyan, John, 485. His writings, 486. Refuses to join the Court party, 487.
Burnet, Gilbert; his merit as a writer and preacher, 433. His History of the Reformation, 434. Retires from England, 435. His residence at the Court of the Prince of Orange, 436. Brings about good understanding between William and Mary, 437. Enmity of James II. to, 503.
Burton, James, a fugitive conspirator; concealed by Elizabeth Gaunt, 247 Informs against his benefactress, 248.
Buyse, Anthony, 151. Accompanies Monmouth's flight, 194. Taken, 196.

Cabinet, the; its origin and nature, 211.
Cambridge University, address from, to James II., 51.
Campbells, persecution of, 146.
Care, Henry, 481.
Carmelites in London, 354.
Carstairs, a witness in the Popish plot; his death, 56.
Cartwright, Thomas, Bishop of Chester, 343.
Caryl, John, English agent at Rome, 331.
Castelmaine, Roger Palmer, Earl of, 301. James II.'s ambassador to Rome, 331. 526. His audiences with the Pope; his dismissal, 530.
Charles II.; his habits, 1. His sudden illness, 4. Refuses the Eucharist from Protestant Bishops, 8. Absolved by Friar Huddleston, 11. His interview with his natural children, 12. His death, 13. Conflicting accounts of his death scene, 13. note. Suspected to have been poisoned, 14. His funeral, 18. His dislike of Jeffreys, 26. Papers in his writing published by James II., 298.
Charlton, Judge, dismissed by James II., 337.
Chatsworth, 512.
Cheshire, contested election for (1685), 54.
Chiffinch, introduces Friar Huddleston to Charles II.'s deathbed, 10. His contract with Jeffreys, 26.
Christ Church, Oxford, appointment of a Roman Catholic to the deanery of, 342.
Christina of Sweden, at Rome, 529.
Churchill, Arabella, 34.
Churchill, John. See Marlborough.
Citters, Arnold Van; Dutch ambassador, 124. Despatch of, 377. note.
Clarendon, Henry Hyde, Earl of, ap-

Digitized by Google

pointed Lord Privy Seal, 22. His interview with Monmouth, 202. Deprecates James II.'s conduct towards the Church, 296. His opinion of the Irish Church, 389. note. Arrives in Ireland as Lord Lieutenant, 395. His want of influence, 396. His alarm and meanness, 398. Incurs the displeasure of James, 403. Dismissed, 413. Effects of his dismission, 417. 452.
Clarges, Sir Thomas, 272.
Claude, John, a Huguenot; his book burned by order of James II., 333.
Claverhouse. See Dundee.
Clench, William, a Roman Catholic writer, 366. note.
Clerkenwell, monastery in, 354.
Cleveland, Duchess of, 2.
Coad, John; his narrative, 232.
Cochrane, Sir John, 117. His disputes with Argyle, 130. His attempt on the Lowlands, 131. Taken prisoner, 136. Ransomed, 241.
Coke, John, sent to the Tower, 283.
Colepepper; his quarrel with the Earl of Devonshire, 510.
Commission, the High, abolished at the Restoration, 345. Reappointed by James II., 348. Proceedings in, against Bishop Compton, 352, 353.
Commons, House of. See Parliament.
Compton, Henry, Bishop of London; tutor to the Princesses Mary and Anne, 286. Disgraced by James II., 289. Declines to suspend Sharp, 348. Proceedings against him, 352. Suspended from spiritual functions, 353. His education of the Princess Mary, 431. His communications with Dykvelt, 514.
Condé; his opinion of William of Orange, 424.
Consistory Courts, 345.
Conventicle Act, 472.
Cornish, Henry; his trial and execution, 245—247.
Covenanters, Scotch, persecution of, 73. Summary executions of, 74—77.
Coventry, riots at, 355.
Country party, the new, 273.
Craven, William, Earl of, 577.
Crewe, Nathaniel, Bishop of Durham; Ecclesiastical Commissioner, 350.
Croese, Gerard; his account of Penn, 82. note, 85. note.
Cromwell, Oliver; his death ascribed to poison, 15.

Danby, Thomas Osborn, Earl of (afterwards Duke of Leeds); restored to the House of Lords, 97. Complains of James II.'s arbitrary acts, 266. His conferences with Dykvelt, 507. His letter to William, 520.
Dangerfield; his trial, 63. His death from flogging, 64.
Danvers, 102. 121. His cowardly conduct, 169.
Darcy, Colonel John, 279.
Dare, Thomas, 154. His quarrel with Fletcher of Saltoun; is slain, 155.
Dartmouth, George Legge, Lord; takes charge of Monmouth, 199.
Delamere, Henry Booth, Lord, accused of partaking in the Western insurrection, 290. Tried in the Lord High Steward's Court, 292. Acquitted, 294. Effect of his acquittal, 295.
Delegates, Court of, 345.
Devonshire, William Cavendish, Earl of, 284. 509. His quarrel with Colepepper, 510. Fined exorbitantly, 511. Imprisoned, 512. Released, 513.
Devonshire, Countess Dowager of, 512.
Digby, Everard; his letters from the Tower, 260.
Dispensing power, James II.'s claim to, 335. Recognised by Court of King's Bench, 339. James's exercise of, 340.
"Dissenter, Letter to a," 477.
Dorchester, Jeffreys at, 223.
Dorchester, Countess of (Catharine Sedley); her power over James II., 323. 325. Retires to Ireland, 327. Returns to London, 406.
Dover, Henry Jermyn, Lord, 301. Made Privy Councillor, 370. His advice to James II., 402. At the Board of Treasury, 416.
Drummond, General, a Scotch Privy

Digitized by Google

Councillor, 373. Resists measures of James II., 377.
Dryden, John, converted to Popery, 456. His Hind and Panther, 458. Literary attacks on, 459.
Dugdale; his death, 56.
Dumbarton's regiment, 183.
Dundee, John Graham, Viscount (of Claverhouse), 73. His cruelties, 74.
Durfey; his Political Odes, 55.
Dykvelt, Everard Van, Dutch envoy; his conversation with James II., 129. His mission to England, 505. His communications with English statesmen, 506—515. Returns to the Hague, 520.

Edgeworth, Miss, 386. note.
Edinburgh, riots in, 371.
Eldon, Lord, on the Roman Catholic Question, 497.
Election of 1685, 52. Controverted returns, 284.
Elizabeth, Princess, suspected to have been poisoned, 15.
Elphinstone, an officer under Argyle; his misconduct, 131. 134.
England, feelings of continental governments towards, 37. Dread of Roman Catholics in, 259. Effect of persecution of Huguenots, 270. Discontent against James II., 452.
England, Church of; James II.'s declaration in favour of, 17. Its loyal principles, 296. Under James II.; its resistance to Popery, 363, 364. Its alarm at James II.'s measures, 473. Its disputes with the King, 474. Courts the Dissenters, 476.
Ernley, Sir John, 272.
Etherege, Sir George, 416.
Essex, contested election for (16), 53.
Essex, Thomas Cromwell, Earl of, 207.
Essex, Robert Devereux, Earl of, 207.
Evelyn, John; his remarks on elections of 1685, 53. note.
Exeter, Jeffreys at, 223.

Fagel, Grand Pensionary; his letter to Stewart, 525.
Fell, Bishop of Oxford, 172.
Fenwick, Sir John, elected for Northumberland, 55. Said to have carried up bill of attainder against Monmouth, 159.
Ferguson, Robert; his early life, 108. His character and intrigues, 109. Instigates Monmouth's rebellion, 111, 112. The author of Monmouth's declaration, 152. Advises Monmouth to proclaim himself King, 165. His strange demeanour, 170. His sermon at Bridgewater, 185. His flight, 242. And mysterious escape, 243. and note.
Fernley, John; his trial and execution, 248.
Feversham, Lewis Duras, Earl of; at Charles II.'s deathbed, 11. His operations against Monmouth, 178. Encamps on Sedgemoor, 181. His incapacity, 184. His military executions, 193. Made Knight of the Garter, 211.
Finch, Heneage. See Nottingham, Earl of.
Finch, Heneage, Solicitor General; takes copy of James II.'s speech, 17. Chairman of Committee of Commons on the King's speech, 276. Dismissed by James II., 338.
Fisher, Bishop, 207.
Five Mile Act, 80. 472.
Fletcher, Andrew, of Saltoun, 117. His fatal quarrel with Dare; escapes to the Continent, 155.
Fox, Charles, opposes James II.'s government, 279. Dismissed from the Pay Office, 289.
Francis, assaults Dangerfield, 63. Tried and executed for murder, 64.
Franciscans in London, 354.
"Freeman, Mrs.," name assumed by Duchess of Marlborough, 520.
Frome, rises in favour of Monmouth; disarmed, 179.
Fullarton, Major, 131. His attempt to save Argyle, 136.

Gaunt, Elizabeth; her trial and execution, 248.

Digitized by Google

Gerard of Brandon, Charles, Lord, trial of, 290.
Giffard, Bonaventura, 407.
Gillies, Peter; military execution of, 75.
Godden, a Roman Catholic priest, 407.
Godolphin, Sidney; appointed chamberlain to the Queen, 21. Conforms to Roman Catholic observances, 46. Sits on the trial of Lord Delamere, 293. His position at Court, 322. Made a commissioner of the Treasury, 417.
Goodenough, Richard, a Whig refugee, 104. Taken after the battle of Sedgemoor; pardoned, 242. His evidence against Cornish, 246. Witness in the trial of Lord Delamere, 294.
Grafton, Duke of, repulsed by rebels at Philip's Norton, 178.
Greenock, Sir John Cochrane at, 131.
Grey of Wark, Ford Grey, Lord; escapes from the Tower; his trial for the seduction of Lady Henrietta Berkeley, 105, 106. Lands at Lyme with Monmouth, 151. His flight from Bridport, 155. Resists Monmouth's design of deserting his followers, 180. His cavalry routed at Sedgemoor, 188. Accompanies Monmouth's flight, 194. Taken, 195. His interview with the King, 201. Ransomed, 241.
Guildford, Francis North, Earl of, Lord Keeper; obnoxious to James II., 20. His dispute with Jeffreys, 29. His death, 218.
Guizot, M., papers collected by, 40. note.

Habeas Corpus Act, 256. note.
Hague, the, Dutch archives at, 14. note.
Haines, Joseph, 454.
Hales, Sir Edward; his apostasy; mock proceedings against, 339.
Halifax, George Savile, Viscount; his contest with Rochester, 4. Disliked by James II., 20. 22. Keeps aloof from Roman Catholic celebrations, 47. His foreign policy, 255. Opposes James II.'s measures, and is dismissed from the Cabinet, 265. Takes part in the debate on the King's speech, 285. Author of the "Letter to a Dissenter," 478. His conferences with Dykvelt, 509. His letter to William, 520.
Halstead, Robert; his "Succinct Genealogies," 64. note.
Hamilton, William Douglas, Duke of, 373. Resists James II.'s policy, 374. 377.
Hampden, John, tried for high treason, 290. His life spared, 291.
Hastings, Warren; question raised on his trial, 98.
Herbert, Arthur, Admiral; his dismissal, 468. His communications with Dykvelt, 514.
Herbert, Sir Edward, Lord Chief Justice; his decision in favour of the dispensing power, 339. Ecclesiastical Commissioner, 352. His conduct in the case of Bishop Compton, 353.
Hewling, William and Benjamin, executed, 228.
Hickes, a rebel fugitive, 218.
Hills, Henry, printer of Popish tracts, 365.
Holland, constitution of, 125. Religious parties in, 421. French invasion, 440. Political works printed in, 524.
Holmes, Abraham, execution of, 227.
Hounslow Heath, camp on, 357.
Howard, Lord, of Escrick, 103. note.
Howard, Philip, Cardinal, 42.
Howe, John, dissenting preacher, leaves England, 252. and note. Returns to England; refuses to join the Court party, 484.
Huguenots, persecution of, 167. Their exiles, 269. Their treatment by James II., 332. Collection for, in England, 333. Which is frustrated by James, 334.
Hume, Sir Patrick, 117. Takes part in Argyle's expedition to Scotland, 129. His disputes with Argyle, 130. 133. Escapes to the Continent, 136.
Huddleston, John, a monk, 10. Absolves Charles II., 11.

James II.; his conduct in Charles II.'s

Digitized by Google

illness, 6. 8. Procures a Roman Catholic priest, 11. His account of Charles's death, 14. note. His speech to the Privy Council, 17. Proclaimed King, 18. His ministry at commencement of reign, 21. Shows favour to Jeffreys, 26. Calls a Parliament, 29. His apologies to Barillon, 31. Receives money from France, 32. Sends Churchill ambassador to France, 33. His subjection to Lewis XIV., 37. Innocent XI.'s advice to him, 42. His fluctuating policy, 43. Hears mass publicly, 46. His coronation, 47. Omissions in the religious services, 49. Tory addresses to, 50. His hatred of the Puritans, 72, 73. His feeling towards the Quakers, 78. Liberates Quaker and Roman Catholic prisoners, 84. His speech to Parliament, 90. Prepares for the defence of Scotland against Argyle, 123. His interview with the Dutch ambassadors, 124. Takes measures against Monmouth, 158. Adjourns Parliament, 162. Reviews regiments from Holland, 173. Arrests suspected persons, 174. His interview with Monmouth, 200. With Earl Grey, 201. His partial conduct to the leading rebels, 237. His power at its height, 254. His treaty with Holland, 255. Domestic policy, 256. His army, 257. His designs in favour of Popery, 259. Impolicy of his proceedings, 263. Violates the Test Act, 264. Dismisses Halifax, 265. General discontent against, 266. Embarrassed by proceedings in France, 270. His speech to Parliament, 271. Parliamentary opposition to, 272. 280. Reprimands the Commons, 282. Attends sitting of the Peers, 288. Prorogues Parliament, 289. Publishes papers of Charles II., 298. Parties in his Court, 301—305. His mode of arguing, 316. His blind reliance on the Church of England, 317. Encouraged in his errors by Sunderland, 318. Catharine Sedley's influence over him, 324. His conduct to the Huguenots, 332 His designs, 336 Dismisses refractory judges, 338. Gives preferments to Roman Catholics, 340. His designs against the Church, 344. Appoints a new Court of High Commission, 348. Discontent excited by his proceedings, 353. Forms camp on Hounslow Heath, 357. His anger at the Scotch disturbances, 372. His negotiation with Scotch Privy Councillors, 374. His arbitrary government in Scotland, 380—382. His conduct towards Ireland, 383. Loses the opportunity of reconciling the races, 390, 391. Consequences of his policy, 393. Employs Papists in the army, 398. Displeased with Clarendon, 403. His zeal for making proselytes, 407. Dismisses Rochester, 411. Dismisses Clarendon, 413. Designs to conciliate the Puritans, 460. 463. Grants partial toleration in Scotland, 465. His system of "closeting," 467. His Declaration of Indulgence, 469. His disputes with the Church, 474. Courts the Dissenters, 475. William's and Mary's remonstrance to, 495. His exclusive employment of Papists, 499. His enmity to Burnet, 503. Complains of Dykvelt's intrigues, 520. His disputes with William, 522. Demands return of English troops, 523.

Jansenists, 314.

Jeffreys, Sir George, afterwards Lord; his character, 23. His early career. 24. Favoured by James II.; made Chief Justice, 26. Raised to the peerage, 28. His dispute with Lord Keeper Guildford, 29. His conduct on Baxter's trial, 67. His western circuit, 217. His conduct at the trial of Lady Lisle, 221, 222. At Dorchester; at Exeter, 223. In Somersetshire, 224. Number of his victims, 225. His conduct to the Hewlings, 228. To Tutchin, 229. His extortions, 232. Enduring hatred of, in the west, 243. Made

Digitized by Google

Lord Chancellor, 244. In the House of Peers, 288. At the trial of Lord Delamere, 293. His duplicity to the parties in the Cabinet, 321. Made President of the new Court of High Commission, 349.
Jennings, Sir Edmund, 272.
Jennings, Frances, 517.
Jennings, Sarah. See Marlborough, Duchess of.
Jermyn, Henry. See Dover, Lord.
Jesus, order of (Jesuits); its energy, 308. Discipline and self-devotion of its members, 309. Accommodates itself to all cases, 311. Its ultramontanism, 312. Contests with Jansenists, 313. Becomes an instrument of Lewis XIV., and estranged from the Pope, 314. Establishment of, in the Savoy, 354. Their dominion over James II., 480. In Rome; their reception of the English embassy, 529.
Impeachment, question regarding, 98.
Indulgence, Declaration of, by James II., 469. Its illegality, 470. Was a boon to the Dissenters, 472.
Innocent XI., Pope; his dispute with Lewis XIV., 40. His advice to James II., 42. His Jansenist tendencies, 314. His moderation towards England, 344. His dislike of the Jesuits' proceedings in England, 526. His coldness to Lord Castelmaine, 528. 530. (Compare Rome, Court of.)
Johnson, Samuel; his "Julian the Apostate," 359, 360. Imprisoned, 360. His address to the soldiers; prosecuted, 361. His punishment, 363.
Johnstone, agent of communication between England and the Hague, 505. note, 522.
Jones, Chief Justice, dismissed by James II., 337.
Ireland, Roman Catholics in, tolerated by the law, 383. Hostility of races in, 384. Celtic population and aristocracy, 385, 386. Old and new English colonists, 387. Tyrconnel, Lord Deputy, 413. Dismay of English colonists, 415.
Irish Church, 389.
Irish emigrants in England, 498.
Julian, the Emperor, compared to James II., 359.

Keating, John, Irish Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, resists Tyrconnel's measures, 400.
Ken, Bishop; his address to Charles II. on his deathbed, 7. Visits Monmouth, 202. Relieves rebel prisoners, 216. Vainly intercedes with the King, 244. At the Hague, 430.
Kendall, Captain James, 279.
Ketch, John, executioner of Monmouth, 205, 206. and note.
Kiffin, William; James II.'s attempt to cajole him, 488, 489.
Kirke, Colonel Percy; in Somersetshire, 211. His "Lambs," 212. His executions, 213. Extortions, 214. Unfounded story of, 215. Recalled, 216. His Protestantism, 266.

Lainez, a Jesuit, 312.
Lauder, Sir John, of Fountainhall, 376.
Leopold I., Emperor of Austria; his letter to James II., 39. note.
Lestrange, Roger, member for Winchester, 85. His account of the distress of the Nonconformists, 253. note. Sent by James II. to Edinburgh, 379. His answer to a Letter to a Dissenter, 217.
"Letter to a Dissenter," 477.
Lewis XIV.; his transactions with James II., 30. 32. General fear and hatred of, 38. His policy towards England, 39. note. His dispute with Innocent XI., 40. 42. Retracts privileges of Protestants, 267. Revokes Edict of Nantes, 268. General reprobation of his conduct, 270. His instructions to Barillon, 275. Supports the Jesuits, 314. His invasion of Holland, 440. His complicity in the designs against Burnet, 504. note.
Leyburn, John, Vicar Apostolic in England, 374. 407.
Lime Street, Roman Catholic Chapel in 256.

Digitized by Google

Lincoln's Inn Fields, Franciscan establishment in, 354.
Lisle, Alice, harbours fugitive rebels, 218. Her trial, 220—222. Put to death, 223.
Lobb, Stephen, 482.
Locke, John, excepts Roman Catholics from claim to toleration, 262.
Lockhart, Sir George, Lord President of the Court of Session, 373. Resists James II.'s policy, 374. 377.
London, fails to support Monmouth, 169. Roman Catholic establishments in, 354. Agitation against them, 355, 356.
Longleat Hall, 153.
Loo, William III.'s mansion at, 440.
Lowther, Sir John, 284.
Ludlow, Edmund, refuses to take part in Whig plots, 110.
Lumley, Richard, Lord, 172. Pursues Monmouth, 195.
Lyme, Monmouth lands at, 151.

Mackenzie, Sir George, Lord Advocate, 378. Dismissed, 379.
Mackintosh, Sir James; his collection of newsletters and other documents, 14. note. His opinion on the Roman Catholic question, 497.
Maclachlan, Margaret, murder of, 77.
Marlborough, John Churchill, Duke of; his rise, 34. His character, 35. Ambassador extraordinary to France, 36. His operations against Monmouth, 173, 174. At Sedgemoor, 189. His pity for the convicted rebels, 228. Sits on the trial of Lord Delamere, 293. His communications with Dykvelt; his motives for deserting James, 515. His letter to William, 521.
Marlborough, Sarah, Lady, 518. Her influence over her husband, 519. Her friendship with the Princess Anne, 520.
Mary of Modena, Queen; her rapacity, 233. Obtains assignment of rebel prisoners, 234. Rapacity of her maids of honour, 235. Her jealousy of Catharine Sedley, 326. Her dislike of Rochester, 329. Suspected to have been bribed by Tyrconnel, 414.
Mary, Princess, afterwards Queen, 430. Her relations with her husband, 431. Which are cleared up by Burnet, 437. Her attachment to her husband, 438. Her disapproval of the Declaration of Indulgence, 495.
Massey, John, a Roman Catholic, made Dean of Christchurch, 343.
Massillon; his character of William III., 444. note.
Maynard, Sir John, 277.
Mazarin, Duchess of, 3.
Melfort, John Drummond, Lord; his apostasy, 369.
Meres, Sir Thomas, 87.
Mew, Bishop of Winchester, 181. Lends his horses for the artillery at Sedgemoor, 190.
Middleton, Charles, Earl of, Secretary of State; manager of the House of Commons for James II., 87. 272. 279. His moderate counsel to James, 297.
Militia, 276. 281.
Milton, Christopher (brother of the poet), raised to the bench by James II., 337.
Monmouth, James, Duke of; his character, 106. His residence at the Hague, 107. Retires to Brussels, 112. Consents to the attempt on England, 113. His preparations at Amsterdam, 122. Detained in the Texel, 148. Sails; arrives at Lyme, 150. His declaration, 152. His popularity in the West, 153. Enters Taunton, 158. His reception, 164. Proclaimed King, 166. His reception at Bridgewater, 170. His army, 171. Marches to Glastonbury, 174. Threatens Bristol, 175. Marches towards Wiltshire, 178. His desperate condition, 179. His scheme of escape; marches to Wells, 180. At Bridgewater, 181. Surveys the royal army, 182. Resolves on a night attack, 184. His conduct in the battle of Sedgemoor, 188. His flight,

Digitized by Google

189—194. And capture, 196. His entreaties for pardon, 198. Taken to London, 199. His interview with James II., 200. His interviews with his wife and others, 202—204. His execution, 204—206. Popular devotion to, 208. 210. Believed to be living, 209. Severities to his adherents, 226—231. Conduct of William of Orange to him, 447.

Monmouth, Charles Mordaunt, Earl of (afterwards Earl of Peterborough); his maiden speech in the House of Peers, 287. and note. Advises William to invade England, 450.

Montague, Chief Baron, dismissed by James II., 337.

Montague, Charles; his early intimacy with Prior, 460.

"Morley, Mrs.," name assumed by Princess Anne, 520.

Murray, Alexander Stuart, Earl of; his apostasy, 370. Made Lord High Commissioner, 375.

Nantes, Edict of, revoked, 268.

Nelthorpe, a rebel fugitive, 218.

Neville, Judge, dismissed by James II., 337.

Nonconformists, persecution of, by James II., 251—253. James II.'s design for a coalition with, 463. The penal statutes suspended, 470. Their feelings with regard to the Declaration of Indulgence, 472. Hold the balance of power between the Court and the Church, 474. Courted by both parties, 475, 476. Some of them side with the Court, 481. Their addresses, 483. The majority with the Church, 485. Their dissatisfaction with their ministers of the Court party, 491, 492.

Nonconformists in Ireland, 388.

North, Sir Dudley; his career and character, 94, 95.

North, Roger; his statement respecting Dangerfield, 64. note.

Northampton, Spencer Compton, Earl of, 32.

Northamptonshire, contested election for (1685), 53.

Northumberland, election for (1685), 55.

Nottingham, Heneage Finch, Earl of; his high reputation, 507.

Nottingham, Daniel Finch, Earl of; his conferences with Dykvelt, 507. His character and appearance, 508.

Oates, Titus; proceedings against; attempts to procure his escape; his appearance, 57. His trial, 58. Conviction and sentence, 59. His punishment, 60. His impostures, why successful, 291.

Oglethorpe, Colonel, attacks rebels at Keynsham, 177. At Sedgemoor, 189. note.

O'Neills, family of, 387.

Orange, dismantled by Lewis XIV., 443.

Ormond, James Butler, Duke of; high public estimation of, 20. Recalled from Ireland, 22. Keeps aloof from Popish observances, 47. His moderate counsel to James II., 297. Supports Catharine Sedley, 325.

Oxford, loyal address from, to James II., 51. Loyalty of, 172. Roman Catholics at, under James II., 342. Bishopric of, 343.

Palatine, Elector, the; his prudent advice to James II., 356.

Parker, Samuel, made Bishop of Oxford, 343.

Parliament of 1685, 29. Its attachment to the Court, 56. Meets; preliminary consultations, 85. Elects a Speaker, 87. Its proceedings regarding religion, 92, 93. Votes supplies, 94. Attaints Monmouth, 159. Its liberal supplies to James II., 160. Adjourned, 162. Meets, 271. Opposition organised in, 272. Majorities against Government, 279 282. Addresses James II. on the Test, 280. Reprimanded by him, 282. Prorogued, 331.

Parliament, Scotch, of 1685, 69. Its subserviency to James II.; enacts statute against conventicles, 70. Its

Digitized by Google

meeting in 1686; its refractory spirit, 375. Representatives of towns, 376. Adjourned. 380.
Pascal, Blaise, 314.
Pasquinades, 530.
Patrick, Simon, 407.
Pearson, John, Bishop of Chester; his death, 343.
Peculiars, Court of, 345.
Pembroke, Thomas Herbert, Earl of, 171.
Penn, William, 80. His influence with James II., 81. His high reputation, 82. His character, 83. Conducts bargain for ransom of the Taunton young ladies, 235, 236. note. His presence at execution of Cornish, 247. At the burning of Elizabeth Gaunt, 249. His services to James II., 483. His proposal of equivalents, 501.
Pepys, Samuel, at the Admiralty, 21.
Pepysian Library, MS. in, 190. note. Ballads in, 210. note, 358. note.
Perth, James Drummond, Earl of, Chancellor of Scotland, 369. Apostatises, 376. Supports the policy of James II., 382.
Peterborough, Henry Mordaunt, Earl of, converted to Popery, 453.
Petre, Father, 315. Refused a dispensation by the Pope, 344. Tyrconnel's intrigues with, 414.
Philip's Norton, skirmish at, 178.
Pollexfen, counsel for Baxter, 67.
Portman, Sir William, takes Monmouth prisoner, 196.
Portsmouth, Duchess of, 3. Her conduct during the last illness of Charles II., 5. 9.
Powell, Sir John, 511. One of the judges at the Bishops' trial, 371. Delivers his opinion, 380. Dismissed, 415.
Powis, Sir Thomas, Solicitor General, 338.
Powis, William Herbert, Earl of, 300. Made Privy Councillor, 340. His advice to James II., 402.
Preston, Richard Graham, Viscount; Secretary of State for Scotland, 87. His moderate counsel to James II., 297.
Press, censorship of, 162.
Prideaux, Edmund, buys his liberation from Jeffreys, 232.
Prior, Matthew; his early intimacy with Charles Montague, 460.
Pulton, Andrew, a Roman Catholic divine, 366. note.
Puritans, policy of James II. towards, 461.

Quakers, 78. Under James II., 79.
Queensberry, William Douglas, Duke of, 368. His fall in James II.'s favour, 370. Dismissed from his employments, 381.

Rhynsault, story of, 215. and note.
Richelieu, reduces the Huguenots to submission; confirms the Edict of Nantes, 267.
Riddle, captor of Argyle, 137.
Rochester, John Wilmot, Earl of, 434.
Rochester, Lawrence Hyde, Earl of; denounced by Halifax, 4. Lord President at James II.'s accession, 17. Appointed Lord Treasurer, 21. His embarrassment in regard to Roman Catholic compliances, 46. Sits on the trial of Lord Delamere, 293. His advice to James, 296. His intrigue in favour of Catharine Sedley, 325. His loss of influence, 329. 404. Made Ecclesiastical Commissioner, 351. Attempt to convert him to Popery, 406. His conferences with Popish divines, 407. His interview with Barillon, 408. His distress, 409. His conversation with the King, 410. His dismission, 411. Unworthily regarded as a martyr for the Church, 412. Effects of his dismission, 417.
Roman Catholic divines, overmatched by Protestant writers, 365.
Roman Catholics, causes of antipathy to, 259. Why discredited, 260. Moderate section of, 299. Violent party of, 301. Question of removal of disabilities from, 497. Undue employment of, by James II., 499.
Rumbold, Richard, 104. Accompanies

Digitized by Google

Argyle, 121. Takes the Castle of Ardkinglass, 133. Endeavours to support Argyle's authority. 135. His capture, 143. Executed, 144. His justification of the Rye House Plot, 145.
Rumsey, John; his evidence against Cornish, 246.
Russell, Edward (afterwards Earl of Orford), 513.
Russell, Lord William, attended by Burnet, 435.
Rye House Plot, Rumbold's justification of, 145.

Salisbury, James Cecil, Earl of, converted to Popery, 453.
Sancroft, Archbishop, at Charles II.'s deathbed, 7. Papers of Charles II. shown to him, 298. Declines Ecclesiastical Commissionership, 350.
Savoy, the, establishment of Jesuits in, 354.
Sawyer, Sir Robert, Attorney General, 338.
Saxon colonists in Ireland, 130.
Saxton, witness against Lord Delamere, 294.
Sclater, Edward; his double apostasy, 340, 341.
Scotch Covenanters (time of Argyle's expedition); their fanaticism, 131, 132.
Scotch refugees, 113—117. Their unreasonable conduct, 537, 538.
Scotland, state of (1686), 367. Parties in the Council, 368. Favour to Roman Catholics, 370. News from, intercepted by James II., 380. Arbitrary government in, 380—382. Partial toleration, under James II., 465.
Sedgemoor, 182. Battle of, 186—190. Conflicting accounts, 191. note.
Sedley, Catharine. See Dorchester, Countess of.
Sedley, Sir Charles, 323.
Settlement, Act of (Ireland); Tyrconnel's agitation for its repeal, 402.
Seymour, Sir Edward, 88, 89. His speech on corrupt elections, 91 Sensation produced thereby, 92. His speech against the augmentation of the army, 276.
Sharp, John, Dean of Norwich, 347.
Sherlock, Dr. William, 346.
Short, Dr. Thomas, a physician at Charles II.'s death, 6. 15.
Skelton, Colonel Bevil, English envoy at Amsterdam, 126. His endeavours to prevent Monmouth from sailing, 148, 149.
"Soho:" Monmouth's cry at Sedgemoor, 186. and note.
Somersetshire; traditions of the peasantry, 183. Their valour at the battle of Sedgemoor, 189. Jeffreys in, 224—228.
Spain, feelings of, towards England, 38. Court of, condemns Lewis XIV.'s conduct to Protestants, 269.
Speke, Hugh, 360. Distributes Johnson's Tracts, 361.
Sprat, Thomas, Bishop of Rochester, Ecclesiastical Commissioner, 351.
Stafford, William Howard, Viscount; his attainder reversed, 99. Burnet's exhortations to, 435.
Stair, Master of. See Dalrymple, Sir John.
Stamford, Thomas Grey, Earl of, committed for high treason, 289.
Steward, Lord High, Court of, 292.
Stewart James; his correspondence with the Grand Pensionary Fagel, 525.
Stillingfleet, Edward, 407.
Storey, Samuel, 241.
Street, Baron; his collusive resistance to James II., 339.
Sunderland, Robert Spencer, Earl of; retained in office by James II., 21. Conforms to Roman Catholic rites, 46. Encourages the errors of James II.; his motives, 318. Bribed by France; joins the Jesuitical cabal, 319. Converted by James, 320. His intrigues against Rochester, 321. Made Ecclesiastical Commissioner, 352. Bribed by Tyrconnel, 414.
Supremacy, Act of, 344. Curtailment of its powers, 345.

Digitized by Google

Swift, Jonathan, constancy of the Irish populace to, 210.

Tangier, Colonel Kirke at, 211.
Taunton, prosperity of (1685), 162. Its civil and religious politics, 164. Young ladies of; their ransom assigned to the Queen's maids of honour, 235.
Taunton, favoured by James II., 474.
Temple, Sir Richard, 277.
Tenison, Dr., visits Monmouth, 203.
Test Act, violated by James II., 265.
Tillotson; his sermon against the Roman Catholics, 262. Excluded by James from the discussion with Popish divines, 407.
Tindal, Matthew, 454.
Toddington Church, 208.
Tories, their enthusiasm for James II., 50. Their repugnance to a standing army, 258. Their zeal for Church and King, 299.
Tower of London, cemetery of, 207.
Trevor, Sir John, a creature of Jeffreys; elected Speaker, 88.
Turks, war with, in Hungary, 112. Before Vienna, 446.
Turner, Francis, Bishop of Ely; his coronation sermon, 49. Visits Monmouth, 202.
Tutchin, John, punishment of, 229.
Twisden, Sir William, 277.
Tyrconnel, Richard Talbot, Earl of; his services to James II., and infamous character, 302. Appointed general of forces in Ireland, 394. Arrives at Dublin, 399. Remodels the army, 400. His mendacity, 401. Advises the repeal of the Act of Settlement; goes to England, 402. Made Lord Deputy of Ireland, 413. His intrigues, 414. Arrives in Ireland, 415.

Valence, Bishop of; his speech to Lewis XIV., 270.
Victoria, Queen, coronation of, 48.
Vienna, threatened by the Turks, 446.
Villiers, Elizabeth, mistress of William III., 430.

University College, Oxford, Popery in, 342.

Wade, Nathaniel, 103. His share in Monmouth's rebellion, 151. 155. 166. His flight; escapes punishment, 242. Witness in the trial of Lord Delamere, 294.
Walcot, Captain, a Rye House conspirator, 145. note.
Walker, Obadiah, master of University College; declares himself a Roman Catholic, 341. His printing press at Oxford, 365.
Wallop, counsel for Baxter, 67.
Warre, Sir Francis, 235.
Wentworth, Henrietta, Lady, 112. Monmouth's fidelity to, 203. Her death, 208.
Westerhall, the Laird of, 76.
West Indies; transportation of rebels to, 230.
Weston Zoyland, Feversham's head quarters at, 183.
Wharton, Henry, 364.
Wharton, Thomas, elected for Buckinghamshire, 54. His opposition to the Government, 283.
Whigs; their struggle at the election of 1685, 53. Their weakness in Parliament, 87. 93. Refugees on the Continent, 100. 102—109. Their correspondence with England, 101. Support Monmouth, 113. Assemble at Amsterdam, 118. Their plan of action, 120. Their leaders keep aloof from Monmouth, 168.
Wildman, John; his character, 101. Deceives Monmouth, 122. His cowardice, 169.
Wilkes, constancy of the populace to, 210.
William, Prince of Orange, afterwards King of England; his reception of Monmouth in Holland, 107. His advice to Monmouth, 112. His endeavours to prevent Monmouth's attempt, 123. 148. Which are obstructed by the Amsterdam magistrates, 126. Sends back regiments to James II., 149. 173. His per-

Digitized by Google

sonal appearance, 418. Early life and education, 419. Theological opinions, 421. Military talents, 422. His fearlessness, 423. His bad health, 425. His cold manner and strong passions, 426. His friendship for Bentinck, 427. His letters, 428. His relations with the Princess, 431. 437. (See Burnet.) His relations with English parties, 438. His feelings towards England, 439. His love for Holland, 440. His determined hostility to France, 440, 441. His religious fatalism, 442. His European policy, 444. His policy towards England, 445, 446. His conduct to Monmouth, 447. Becomes head of the English opposition, 449. Rejects Mordaunt's project of invasion, 450. Condemns the Declaration of Indulgence, 493. His remonstrance to James II., 495. His views respecting English Papists, 502. His correspondence with English statesmen, 521. His disputes with James, 522. Declares his opinions with regard to the Roman Catholics, 525.

Wilson, Margaret, murder of, 77.

Winchester, Jeffreys at, 218.

Windham, John; his speech against a standing army, 281.

Withins, Sir Francis, 361.

Worcester, riots at, 355.

Wycherley, William, 454.

York, archbishopric of, 343.

Zulestein; his mission to England, 521

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

Digitized by Google

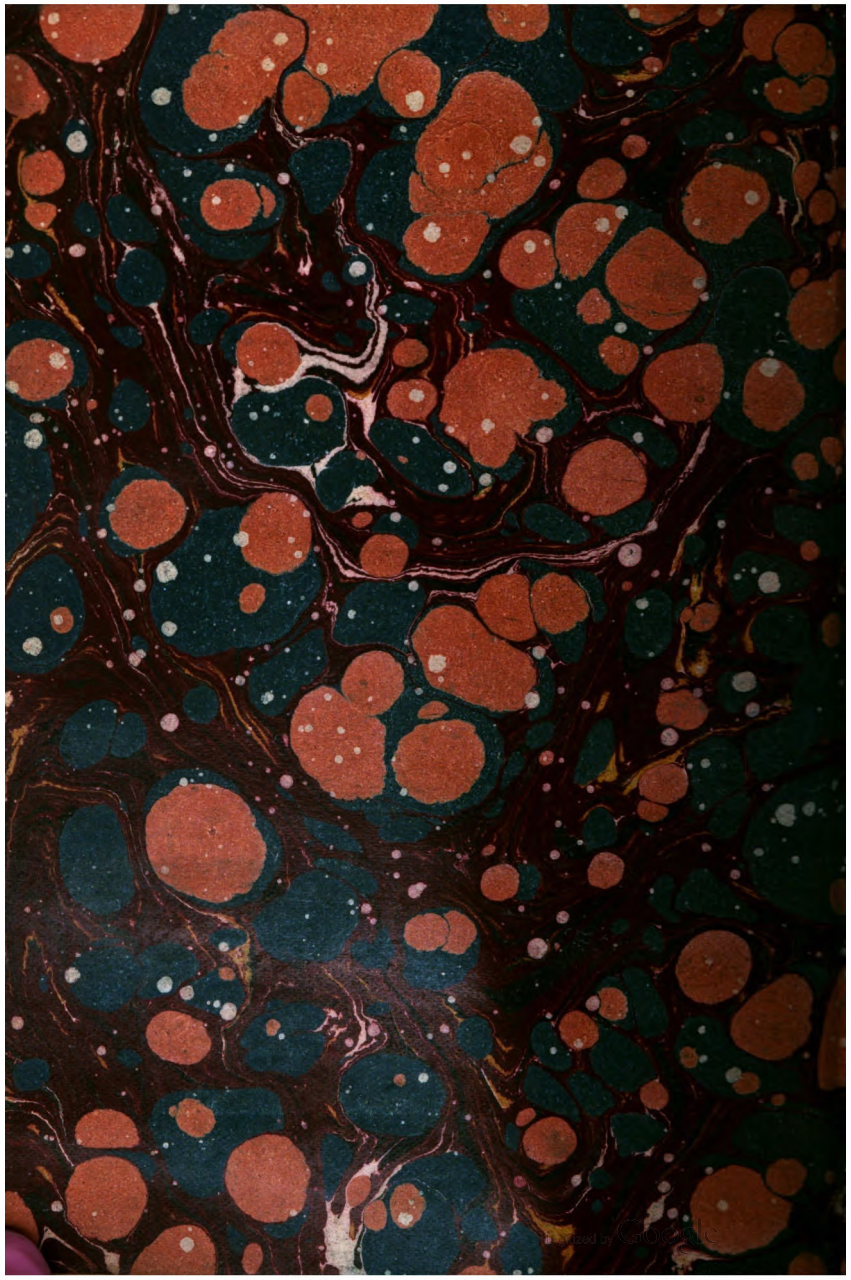
LONDON: PRINTED BY
SPOTTISWOODE AND CO., NEW-STREET SQUARE
AND PARLIAMENT STREET

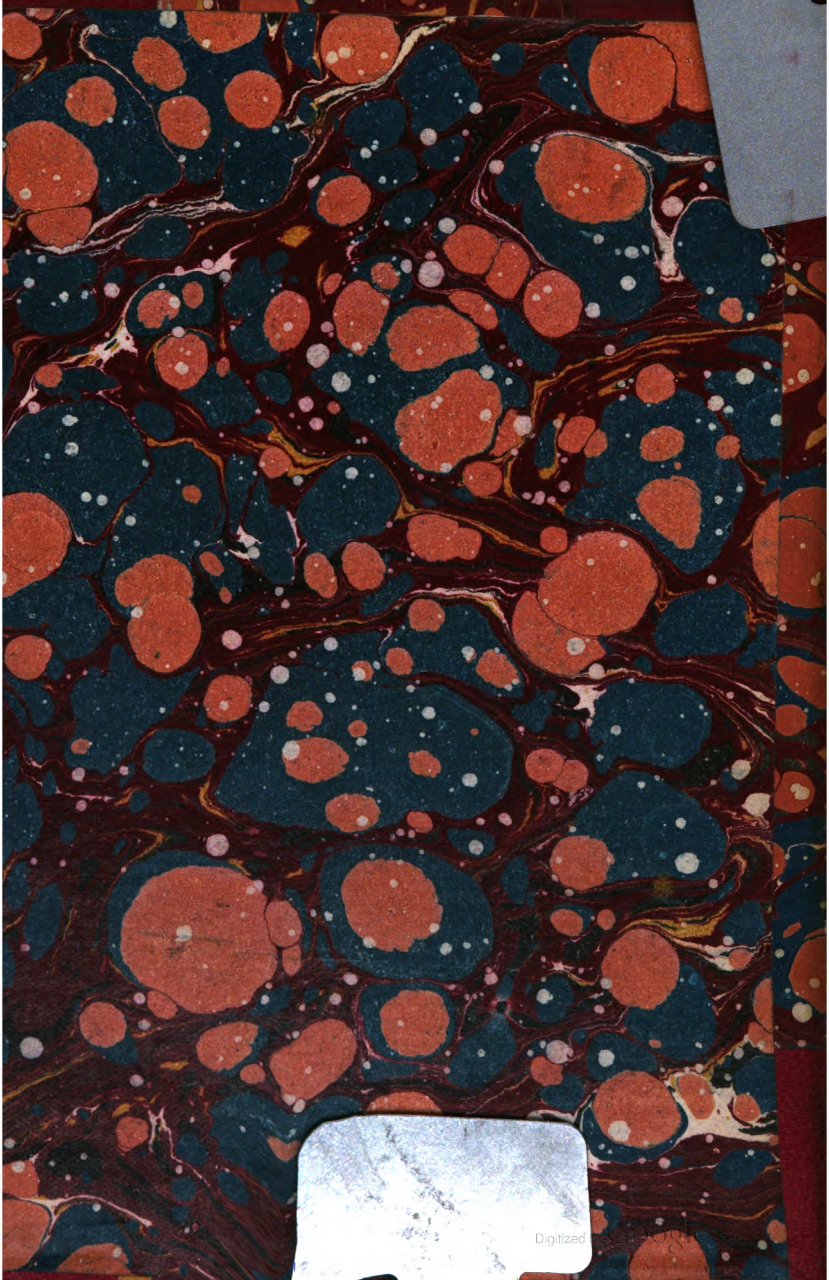
Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google




Digitized by Google